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The Week

WHILE no President can or should be judged by his first two weeks in office, it may be said of Mr. Hoover that he has given more raw material for judgment in his initial fortnight than any other occupant of the White House in this generation. Several of his actions we are glad to applaud. The withdrawal of public lands from oil exploitation is both an immediate aid to an industry suffering from over-production, and the most important step toward conservation taken in recent years. It makes impossible any repetition of the scandals of the Harding regime. We believe, as we said last week, that the decision in regard to Mexico was a wise one, provided you assume that the United States is entitled to interfere in the internal affairs of a neighboring country. That assumption is in our judgment open to grave question, but it is taken for granted by all government officials, and, within its limits, we feel that Mr. Hoover acted both correctly and with a promptness which redoubled the value of what he did. His announcement that there would be no wholesale dismissals from federal offices is a step in the direction of the merit system; and his indicated plan for a reorganization of the executive departments and bureaus would remedy a situation full of grave abuses. We also welcome his decision to reverse Mr. Mellon's policy and give publicity to all tax refunds or credits, where the amount is in excess of $20,000.

THE relation between the President and the press, in his bi-weekly conferences with the Washington correspondents, is a matter of the utmost importance. It is the chief means, and often for months at a time the only one, by which the people can find out what the Chief Executive is thinking about, and what he proposes to do. We are glad to record, therefore, that the new arrangements Mr. Hoover has made seem a distinct advance over those which prevailed under Mr. Coolidge. In some cases the President is to be quoted directly, furnishing the correspondents with the text of his statement; this he has already done as to the withdrawal of oil lands and the commission to investigate law enforcement. In other instances he will consent to be quoted indirectly, and in still others, he will give the newspaper men background information for their own guidance but not for publication. In theory, at least, this represents the greatest degree of frankness in the relations between President and press ever seen in America, and goes beyond anything found in any other important government in the world. To guard against abuse of his frankness, Mr. Hoover has asked a committee of the correspondents to draw up rules excluding from future conferences all except genuine newspaper men whose sole occupation is reporting for newspapers having a telegraphic news service. While the committee wisely declined to draw up written rules for conducting the conferences—something they felt should be the function of the President himself—they worked out a satisfactory *modus operandi* to exclude from the conferences the numerous hangers-on, Wall Street tipsters, and propagandists who have in the past been attending the sessions for their own more or less illegitimate purposes.

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IN STATE legislatures all over the country, hearings on old-age-pension bills have listened this winter to two opposing groups—reactionary employers and the National Civic Federation urging defeat or delay, and local labor and progressive bodies urging the first steps toward a remedy. Matthew Woll, Vice-President of the American Federation of Labor, is acting President of the National Civic Federation. Ralph Easley, of the Civic Federation, is again busy assuming to speak for labor, and calling all those who criticize his organization "Reds" or enemies of the unions. What, we wonder, will Mr. Woll and Mr. Easley say about such enlightened individuals as Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt of New York, who favor old-age-pension legislation? Apparently, "labor," to Mr. Woll and Mr. Easley, means, not the unions, but the open-shop interests which support the National Civic Federation. Mr. Easley boldly speaks right up when there is any forward-looking movement to be killed or "outlawed." But what has ever been heard from him in support of labor's cause when groups of workers were struggling for recognition, or for higher pay, or for shorter hours, or against injunctions? What has the National Civic Federation ever done to extend the organization and the power of labor in either industry or politics?

IT WAS repeatedly explained during the Sacco-Vanzetti case that Massachusetts law presented one grave difficulty tending to prevent justice to the two men. In that state, under existing statutes, it is impossible for the Supreme Court to do what it can in New York and some other states—review the facts of a criminal case coming up to it from the lower court. The Massachusetts Supreme Court can only review the correctness of the legal procedure, to determine whether, in the technical legal sense, the trial was fair. Thus the discovery of new evidence after a trial has ended, no matter how important that evidence might be, and even though it showed the innocence of the defendant incontrovertibly, would not enable the Supreme Court to order a new trial. Shortly after the ending of the Sacco-Vanzetti case, a bill was introduced in the Massachusetts legislature, sponsored by the Bar Association, to remedy this condition by giving the Supreme Court the right to review the facts as well as the law. It was generally taken for granted that the legislature would hasten to remedy the obvious defect in its present system, but this has not proved to be the case. Nineteen months after the execution of these two famous prisoners, the bill has only just been reported out of committee—and adversely. While this fact does not preclude the possibility of favorable action, it makes such action more difficult and unlikely. Presumably the members of the legislature are like the officers of justice and the state officials: they are reluctant to take steps which would prevent another stain of dishonor on their state, because to do so would be to admit the existence of the first.

AS BROKERS' loans fail to be much diminished, and as the prices of shares continue high, discussion of the policies of the Federal Reserve Board in attempting to restrict speculative credit becomes more acrimonious. Mr. Paul Warburg criticizes the Board for not having taken drastic action earlier, and intimates that disaster is approaching because the situation has gotten out of its hands. Mr. Harding, formerly of the Federal Reserve Board, and now Governor of the Reserve Bank of Boston, states that the rediscount rate should have been raised a full point a year ago. Dr. B. M. Anderson, Jr., Economist of the Chase National Bank, also argues for a higher rediscount rate, on the ground that by that means the Reserve Banks can control the situation, and that it will not necessarily restrict business any more than business is now being hampered by high rates anyway. Col. Leonard Ayres, of the Cleveland Trust Company, says that the stock market is "taking business for a ride," and that the extent to which speculators succeed in getting credit for the next few months will determine whether both business and the market "are to be subjected to proximate bumps, or are to go on until they are victims of an ultimate crash." Governor Young, of the Federal Reserve Board, explains the difficulties of the situation, and mildly threatens a higher rate. On the other hand, ex-Governor Stokes of New Jersey expresses the sentiments of a large number of speculators to the effect that the Reserve authorities have no business but to stimulate bull markets with easy credit, and that anything else is that tabooed thing—"governmental interference with private business." Speculators he likens to discoverers such as Columbus. If all the penalties of a mistaken policy could be confined to Governor Stokes and those who sympathize with him, we should be in favor of giving him a whole fleet of brokers' loans and letting him discover what lies at the end of his course.

THE "flaming youth" idea of American colleges is outworn. It was a generalization dear to the uninformed or the semi-hysterical, and it was unsound. Of course there will always be some people with too much time, and too little wit, but the theory that American undergraduates (male and female) are usually either inebriated or amorous is manifestly absurd. There are many proofs that people in college are, on the whole, as sane as people out of college. Nor are undergraduates any less interested in the more serious aspects of the world around them, than those graduated. Anyone could substantiate such statements by careful, unbiassed observation of the much-discussed young.

FOR example, one particularly forceful contradiction of the old flaming-youth gospel is the Model League of Nations Assembly which flourishes in our institutions of higher learning. A few weeks ago, at Vassar, the central eastern colleges and universities met in serious mimicry of Geneva. A League

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Assembly was held; each college representing a League member. (Vassar attended nobly to the overflow of unapportioned nations.) The forms of the League were followed, in detail. Reports of the Secretariat and election of the new President came off with all the precision that is the main characteristic of such events. Every college-country sent three delegates, each equipped to speak from the point of view of his nation *pro tem*. The debating was remarkable. It was more fervent than any witnessed by the public at Geneva. Moreover, to fervor was added the stability of information and thought. The delegates were impressively accurate in representing the general policies of their countries, while dealing with specific problems. The Great Powers hung together in approved fashion. The lesser powers cried their opinions eloquently and lost the vote. This whole undertaking was planned and put into effect by students, and each collegiate representative showed signs of hard boning up on the League. Doubtless, hither and yon in America, an undergraduate individual or group amuses itself by imitating the immoralists of "The Plastic Age." But energy is also liberally expended in other ways.

Law as a Social Instrument

WHEN President Hoover called for the creation of a commission to investigate the failures of law enforcement, he tackled a job that was probably bigger than he knew. Dissatisfaction with the operation of the law and of legal institutions is widespread and varied; it opens up questions which lead into broad fields of human relationships. Existing law probably cannot, in any universal sense, be enforced; and if it were enforced, the results would be far from satisfying the requirements of a complex modern civilization. The Hoover Commission, with sufficient wisdom and time, may illuminate some small corner of this field, but the nation really needs a continuous effort to understand the law and its effects upon society, to which large resources of scholarship might be devoted over many years.

A good deal of our law finds its roots in a far more primitive society, which had not felt the rapid technological, economic and mental changes which have characterized the past century especially. The concentration of population in the cities, the transformation in the character of occupations, the decline of religious authority, the altered position of woman, the disappearance of the family as an economic unit, the growth of great business institutions—these are a few of the gigantic forces which have turned human society upside down. Has our piecemeal tinkering with the law, combined with the prevalent judicial doctrine that it is a self-contained discipline requiring no development except that which it may derive from its own precedents, sufficed to make it the instrument of social control which we need today? To assume that this is so would be absurd.

Legal scholars themselves are becoming more and more conscious of this situation. The Yale Law School has begun to coöperate with economists and psychologists in an effort to understand the practical consequences of the present administration of present law, and will be aided in doing so by the new Institute of Human Relations. The Harvard Law School has founded an Institute of Criminal Law, in order to study the problem of fitting punishment to the criminal rather than to the crime. Most ambitious of all, perhaps, is the new Institute for the Study of Law at Johns Hopkins University. This is not a law school at all in the old sense; it will not aim to train members of the bar, to produce practising lawyers. Rather, it will engage in projects of fundamental social research, and in so doing will aim to develop coöperation among legal scholars and those working in related fields, such as economics, sociology, psychology, or what not.

The immense opportunity open to such an institute may be illustrated by a few elementary considerations. Consider the axiom that ignorance of the law excuses no one. Yet no one has ever counted the number of laws that now exist. Federal statutes, if codified, would occupy not less than 17,000 sections; one state alone has 42,000 laws, and the state and federal appellate courts produce about 22,000 decisions a year. Who is not ignorant of the law? Even judges often are so. Consider the costs and delays of litigation. Consider the confusion of our legal system with regard to domestic relations and divorce, to compensation for injury, to "master and servant" relationships in the light of the development of labor organization and collective bargaining, to loan-shark practices, to insurance. Consider the reports that more than half the serious crimes committed are not followed even by an arrest. Consider the welter of disagreement about paroles, about the breeding of criminals in prison, about the analysis and treatment of psychiatric cases, about the legal definition of "insanity." Consider the pressure, on the one hand, for laws regulating business in numerous ways, and the pressure, on the other, of business against regulation. Consider the unsolved problems of the relationship between big business and the consumer, not excluding the much agitated questions now uppermost in connection with public utilities.

The work to be undertaken by such institutes as that projected at Johns Hopkins is not a duplication of anything now being done. The American Law Institute is working on a restatement of the law; but such an explanation or simplification, while highly useful, will not show how the law operates in society or whether it needs to be changed. Likewise the efforts of practising lawyers who must use the law as it is, and must serve the interests of particular clients, are bound to be restricted in any reshaping of law. Law schools training members of the bar must be mainly vocational; and to produce

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operators of the machine does not leave over-much opportunity for producing designers or re-designers of it. There is need, not only of research into the multifarious problems hinted at above, but also of centers for training persons competent to conduct such research, to influence legislatures, judges and public opinion, to become teachers and scholars elsewhere.

This does not imply that a school of this sort must itself become a propagandist for specific policies. Its work is done when it supplies and arranges the necessary information. It is natural that, in considering research at Johns Hopkins, one should look to the example of the Medical School. The medical authorities, when they have discovered a new remedy, do not engage in advertising and selling it. They merely state as precisely as possible what they have discovered, and leave it to others to make the application, in the faith that a sufficiently self-evident truth will prevail. It is the business of research to create the groundwork, by detailed and systematized facts, by controlled experiment, of self-evident truth.

One does not need to argue long to establish the desirability of an effort of this kind. The real difficulty is to make a beginning at so huge a task. And while nothing has yet been published about the more detailed plans of the Institute, certain hopeful signs may be discerned. The auspices, in the first place, are favorable. The atmosphere of Johns Hopkins, deriving from the original plans of President Gilman, is favorable to research scholarship. The new Institute has been given the same autonomy, the same freedom from entangling commitments of policy or personnel, which characterizes the other graduate schools in the University. The staff will not be burdened by instruction. There is no pressure for quick "results." The "originating group" consists of fertile and wise minds. The scholars to be called will, during their stay, have no other obligation but to further the research projects in view. It will not be necessary to rely solely upon those already engaged on other tasks in the University.

It is not the intention of the originating group to outline a permanent program, which, it is felt, must take form as the work of the school grows. Rather, it will undertake a number of immediate projects of importance, allowing its choice to be governed by the availability of personnel, the social significance of the proposed inquiries, and the scientific contribution to method and technique which may be derived from the work. The first limitation is obvious. The effect of the second may be seen in a general recognition that certain problems are particularly pressing. The third is interesting in view of the intention to attempt, if feasible, controlled experiments in social science, and to make possible the use of quantitative data in legal problems.

A few of the projects suggested, to begin with, are the following:

A study of accident litigation as a possibly wasteful way of dealing with accidents and a source of the overcrowding of court calendars—the study to be thought of as one part of a research into the desirability of special tribunals with varied procedures, and as a type inquiry into the relationship between traditional legal machinery and the situation created by modern technology.

A study of the operation of bankruptcy courts, and of the work of credit men's associations in taking over the administration of bankrupts—as part of an inquiry into the respective functions of governmental and non-governmental social control.

A series of studies of the actual effects of laws regulating private enterprise.

An attempt to establish standards and procedures for collecting data on the administration of justice, so that the results of the numerous surveys of the sort might be comparable.

A study of the technique of getting before courts and legislatures the conclusions of the social sciences, so that there may develop more of a working alliance between the operation of the law and the researches of science.

This list might be considerably enlarged, but it is highly suggestive of the variety and importance of the tasks waiting to be done.

Such enterprises as this at Johns Hopkins may furnish a gleam of light to those philosophers who have been asking whether the material development of the world has not outrun its institutions for control, whether we shall not, like a child playing with a dynamo, irreparably injure ourselves with the physical power that so delights us, whether modern society can develop a mind and a nervous system adequate to govern its overgrown body. We cannot develop a mind by sitting in a library and wishing for it. We can do so, if at all, only by painstaking effort to discover specific maladjustments, to approach them with the aid of all we know and with all the instruments at our command, and to push further our knowledge and our inventiveness in the light of what we are trying to do. Any beginning at this job, however modest, is vital.

The Constitution and Diplomacy

THE State Department has just published an impressive list of the treaties—seventy-six in all—negotiated under the Kellogg regime. The impressiveness of the list is reduced somewhat by the fact that, in a large number of cases, these treaties are simply renewals of former engagements. Nevertheless, the enumeration includes a number of important multilateral conventions, such as the anti-war pact, the conventions drawn up at the Havana conference, the Pan-American Arbitration and Conciliation agreements, and various agreements drawn up at the League of Nations.

Unfortunately, a number of those agreements, signed in some cases nearly four years ago, have

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not yet received the approval of the Senate. It has not acted upon the treaties drawn up last year at the Havana conference, nor the arms-traffic convention drawn up in June, 1925, nor the convention providing for the abolition of import and export prohibitions. In some cases the failure to act is due to the delay of the State Department in sending these treaties to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. In other cases, it is due to the habit which that Committee has formed of pigeonholing these agreements indefinitely. It is a highly inefficient method of conducting business, which not only affects ourselves, but concerns the interests, and arouses the susceptibilities, of foreign nations.

But delay is not the only difficulty of the American system. Under the Constitution, the consent of two-thirds of the Senate is necessary for the approval of any treaty, and a minority of the Senate has relentlessly used its power in order to amend agreements, or to defeat their ratification. In its history, the Senate has made amendments or reservations to no fewer than 146 treaties, and these amendments have been so drastic that forty-eight of such treaties never went into effect. It is an ominous fact that, during the last twenty-five years, the Senate has become more and more energetic in using its veto power. Differences between the Senate and the President over treaties have led to bitter struggles, the most famous example of which is that over the Treaty of Versailles. So strongly did Secretary of State John Hay feel in 1899 that he declared that it was "an irreparable mistake" to give the treaty power to one-third of the Senate. Later he rather extravagantly wrote: "A treaty entering the Senate is like a bull going into the arena; no one can say just how or when the blow will fall—but one thing is certain, it will never leave the arena alive."

While there is no obligation under international law to ratify a treaty following its signature, the United States cannot hope to secure the respect and confidence of the other nations of the world when we repeatedly fail to ratify treaties that our delegates have signed. Unjust though the feeling may be, there are thousands of people in Europe who still believe that the United States was guilty of bad faith in not ratifying the Treaty of Versailles. Obviously, it is desirable to improve the correlation between our system of negotiation and our system of ratification.

Some form of popular control over diplomacy is necessary if governments are to remain democratic and if peoples are to prevent "the interests" from involving them in war. In theory, the conduct of foreign affairs in European countries is more continuously responsible to a legislative body than in the United States. Under the parliamentary system of government, the prime minister and his foreign secretary are answerable at any time to parliament. Herr Stresemann realizes that when he makes a speech, say, on the minorities question at the meeting of the League Council in Geneva, the whole fate of his cabinet may be at stake. A mistake in foreign policy under the parliamentary system may be the one additional grievance that will lead parliament to drive a cabinet out of power. In the United States, however, the State Department is not subject to this type of continuous control. Especially in the field of foreign affairs, where decisions of policy need not take the form of laws and treaties, the President of the United States is an uncrowned king. The only check upon him is the thundering of public opinion and the veto of the Senate. But the senatorial veto applies only to treaties, and even the thundering of opinion may be ineffective in keeping the President from confronting the country with the accomplished fact. Witness the case of President Wilson and Haiti, or of President Coolidge and Nicaragua. In fact, some students argue that while it is safe, under the parliamentary system, to vest wide discretionary powers in the hands of the executive in the field of diplomacy, since the executive is continuously responsible to parliament, such grants under the American system would not be subject to any such control and might, therefore, be gravely abused. Thus, it is argued, the President of the United States should not be allowed to determine which of two states is the aggressor, for the purpose of declaring an embargo; and a representative of the President should not be allowed to vote upon political questions in the League Council, since this might commit the United States without popular approval. In other words, the American Constitution has been invoked as a justification for an isolationist policy. Not satisfied with the extraordinary powers of the Senate over treaties, those who hold this view believe that the President already has too much irresponsible authority.

While undoubtedly our antiquated theory of separation of powers has created this type of problem, The New Republic does not believe it is really as serious as some critics suppose. In the first place, it is doubtful whether the parliaments or peoples of European countries exercise any more control over the conduct of foreign policy than do the Congress or the people of the United States. Despite constitutional formulæ, the conducting of diplomacy, before the War, was the preserve of diplomats. The whole system of secret diplomacy and of alliances was predicated upon the principle of parliamentary irresponsibility. When diplomacy consists in backstairs conversations between diplomats, it is truly dangerous to vest too much discretion in the executive. This type of diplomacy still exists, and the facts show that our State Department is already able to play the game as effectively as other foreign offices. But a new type of diplomacy is coming into existence—the diplomacy of international organization, where decision is made by unanimous vote and where the records of the negotiation are made public to the world. Under this system, secrecy is virtually impossible, and in the case of the Council of the League, where the con-

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sent of fourteen states is necessary, it is improbable that a positive decision would be made which is palpably unjust. A vote of other representatives might decide that a given state had violated its obligations, just as would the vote of an American judge on the World Court. But no such vote could bind the United States to apply any form of sanction without the independent authorization of the American Congress. This principle has already been written into the Covenant, and as far as the United States is concerned, it could be made explicit by a reservation.

The problem before the United States, therefore, is not of imposing further restrictions upon the discretion of the President in matters of foreign policy. The main problem is how to improve our system of treaty ratification. No other country of any importance requires the approval of two-thirds of its upper chamber before a treaty may go into effect. The proposal has frequently been made that the power to approve treaties should be transferred from the Senate to both branches of Congress, acting by majority vote. This would be the ideal—the mathematically democratic—solution. But it is wholly impracticable, simply because of the vast difficulty in obtaining the adoption of the constitutional amendment that such a change would require. It appears that the solution cannot, therefore, take any definite, any legalistic form.

A little more consideration of senatorial susceptibilities by the President would help matters. Had President Wilson really consulted with the leaders of the Senate during the Paris Peace Conference, or had he accepted the reservations of the Senate to the Treaty of Versailles, he would have gained practically all of his main objectives, and avoided the disastrous controversy in which he became involved. The memory of that contest has hovered over Washington to the present day. The success of Mr. Hoover's foreign policy will depend very much upon the degree to which he takes the leaders of the Senate into his confidence.

Further progress will also come in the election of more Senators having a sound and sympathetic knowledge of the problems of the world as a whole; but probably the best hope for an enlightened foreign policy lies in the education of public opinion. Perhaps the most interesting phenomenon of the last five years has been the drive which organized and disinterested public opinion has made in regard to foreign affairs. The efforts of these groups have had a profound effect upon our disarmament policy and upon the relation of the United States to the World Court, and to Latin America. No Secretary of State enjoys having a continuous torrent of criticism beat down upon him like a tropical storm. If this criticism is really widespread, it is bound to make its impression. The work of such organizations as the National Council for Prevention of War, the League of Nations Association, the Outlawry of War group, the Conference on the Cause and Cure of War, and the Federal Council of Churches should be continued upon an active and intelligent plane. The work of the more strictly educational organizations such as the Foreign Policy Association, the League of Women Voters, the World Peace Foundation, and the Council of Foreign Relations should also be vigorously carried on. It is no exaggeration to say that, as a result of the efforts of these and other organizations, there is a better informed opinion upon foreign affairs in the United States than in most other countries of the world. And it is a curious fact that this vast educational effort would not have come into existence, at least in its present extent, except for the realization that our constitutional system for the conduct of foreign affairs had temporarily broken down. Thus good cometh out of evil!

Although the Senate may not be a democratically constituted body, in the long run it is responsive to public opinion. In criticizing the Senate in regard to foreign affairs, we must remember that it is the only important forum of discussion in the United States; and that it is the only branch of the federal government where progressivism is able to get a hearing. As far as foreign affairs are concerned, the Senate is becoming more generous in its outlook. It ratified the anti-war pact without reservations; it has approved a convention drawn up at the League. In attempting to cure the defects of the Senate in regard to foreign policy, we must be careful not to impair or to encourage others to impair the really vital functions which the Senate performs for the life of America as a whole. Instead of supporting constitutional amendments, or any Dawes scheme for clipping its wings, let us concentrate on the education of opinion. It may well be that in the United States we are working out a unique type of popular control, not the control of Congress over the President, as represented by party votes of confidence, but the indirect, propagandist, pressure-control of powerful, well informed and relatively disinterested organizations of opinion. There are disadvantages to both systems. But in present-day America there is more hope for progress in the field of opinion than in any attempted reorganization of governmental procedure.

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The Recurring Rebellion in Mexico

At bottom it reduced itself to the quarrel, eternal among Mexicans, of groups, plural, desirous of seizing the power, which is singular.

THIS summary of the wrangling among the Revolutionists—Carrancistas versus Villistas—even before they had achieved their victory over the "usurper," Victoriano Huerta, in 1914, appears in Martin Luis Guzman's narrative of the Mexican Revolution, "El Aguila y la Serpiente"—an eagle clutching a serpent being Mexico's escutcheon. Once a "Constitutionalist" "patriot" (both titles require quotation marks) he became an author in the enforced exile following his bad guess in joining the de la Huertistas. He has proved himself infinitely shrewder as a retrospective commentator on Mexican affairs than as a participant therein. For his definition fits with equal accuracy the squabble to which it was applied, the de la Huerta rebellion five years ago, the abortive flare-up which cost presidential candidates Francisco Serrano and Arnulfo Gomez their lives eighteen months ago, and the present assault on the Mexican government, nation and people.

Indeed, nothing could be more classical than the present revolt. No finesse is needed to categorize it. It is a sordid military coup, Pretorian in concept and method, with greed as its sole motivation, and loot as its one objective.

It was precisely by such an uprising against the Spanish monarch in 1820 that a group of corrupt military chieftains, carrying His Majesty's commissions, wearing the king's uniform, drawing pay from the royal treasury, brought the Mexican state into being. Both the clergy who instigated the rebellion and the military who carried it out were seeking a perpetuation of their special privileges and powers. It was precisely such treachery, masquerading under a high-sounding declaration of purpose, that established a precedent for Mexican military conduct which persists to this day. For 109 years of Mexican national life, scoundrels in uniform, wearing a general's chevrons, have consistently used the power and force entrusted to them as a means of self-enrichment, until their avarice, no longer satiated by peace-time perquisites, flamed into open revolt against the government and country which they were sworn to protect.

For the first generation of Mexico's life as a state, from 1820 to the 1850's, corrupt military and corrupt clergy dominated the nation. The first serious attempt to limit their power was made in the middle of the century by Benito Juarez and a group of high-minded "Reformists." Only after winning a devastating three years' civil war, and then defeating an imperialist intervention engineered by the same forces, was he able to assume a brief control over the forces of turbulence. But his dominance was too short-lived to be lasting or significant. After his death, the unsuccessful revolt of Porfirio Diaz against him, aided by the clergy, was turned into a victory over his successor Lerdo. But Porfirio Diaz, by taking the military ring into partnership with him, and dividing the spoils, was able to keep order for a generation. The exploited peon paid the cost, as he has for four centuries.

Then came the Revolution, headed by the sincere and idealistic, if not wholly practical, Madero. Since then the history of Mexico may continue to be written—as before—in terms of betrayals. The last eighteen years have been a struggle against the strangling grip of the dead hand—of several varieties—and not the least of these is the iron gauntlet of militarism. The real tragedy and irony of Mexico's efforts at self-emancipation is that these *cuartelazos,* or barracks assaults, have come increasingly, not from the avowed enemy, "the reaction," as it is termed in the revolutionary camp, but from the men who have supposedly been leaders in the new liberation.

Thus the Mexican body politic has passed from one administration to another by repetitions of the process known biologically as fission. And the fission (or scission) has taken place in the very heart of the revolutionary movement. It split off one-third of the long-united Sonora triumvirate, when de la Huerta led his rebellion against Obregon and Calles.

Could friends have been "bosomer" than Obregon and his Secretary of War, Serrano? A few months before, they had been dining, wining and toasting one another publicly. Then both desired the presidency. Revolt and the firing squad. Arnulfo Gomez, the other rebel, had also been from the first—that is, for thirteen years—a companion-in-arms of the other two. Together they had organized the "Fourth Sonora Battalion," the first in the field against Victoriano Huerta; together they had marched through the famous "eight-thousand-kilometers campaign" down the west coast to capture Mexico City from the Federals, then north again to defeat the "Conventionists," that is, the forces of "Pancho" Villa. They had stood together in the justified revolt against Carranza (the leaders of which, incidentally, were not in his service, an important distinction) and had withstood the de la Huerta secession.

And now the latest uprising! Given the character of the Mexican general, such a revolt was fore-

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castable, the moment Obregon was assassinated by a religious fanatic. At the time, the army ring, taken unawares by Calles' dramatic renunciation of the presidency, lacked a candidate of its own. But catching them off their guard—literally so, when he assembled them in one room at a banquet last September and asked which one of their number they had determined upon as the nation's next leader—he was able to get them momentarily to agree to support a legally constituted candidate even if he were a civilian. (In his heart virtually every general was his own presidential candidate!) Thus Calles could project before the nation the high aim of civilian rule and his vision of the ending of *caudillismo* (rule by the "man on horseback") and the inauguration of "a government of laws, not of men." In the confusion and exaltation of the moment, Emilio Portes Gil, civilian, former Governor of Tamaulipas, and then Secretary of *Gobernacion,* was chosen by Congress for the interim presidency of fourteen months. The six-year term, beginning in February, 1930, thereupon became the objective of the *politicos,* military and civilian, as soon as they had recovered from their surprise.

If the generals who head the revolt are to be classified, they fall first into the category of close political friends of Obregon, whose death, while not causing the loss of their sinecures, nevertheless lessened their influence at the National Palace. Secondarily, it may be affirmed that, with the possible exception of Jose Gonzalo Escobar, who had a good reputation—probably undeserved—the revolters include the most conspicuously corrupt and greedy of the generals. For their continued presence in the army, the late President Obregon cannot escape a large measure of blame. To a lesser degree the censure carries over to Calles, though, goodness knows, he has wrestled with the problem, and what loyalty to flag and country there may be today in the Mexican army he has to a large degree instilled.

Among the revolting generals is the brutal Fausto Topete, his youthful face bloated with dissipation, whom Obregon "imposed" on the state of Sonora at its last gubernatorial election; Francisco Manzo, the archetype of the paunched and gluttonous Mexican general; Jesus M. Ferreira, with the dapper little moustache, who coined fortunes out of robbing rich and poor in the course of the Catholic rebellion in Jalisco, at the capital of which, Guadalajara, was his *jefatura de operaciones;* Francisco Urbalejo, the Indian, who betrayed Carranza by switching his troops at the last minute to the revolutionist bandwagon; and Roberto Cruz, former Inspector-General of police in the Federal District, inventor of the dastardly *"ley de suicidio,"* by which prisoners were found dead in their cells, supposedly at their own hand; cruel and ruthless, he exploited the Catholic rebellion to the limit for his personal profit. Such are the leaders of the rebellion.

It would not do to assert that the converse holds—and that those who remain faithful to their elementary soldiers' duty are all men of honor and patriotism. All too soon another revolt might come along to dispel so optimistic a judgment. Some, moreover, would readily switch were rebel success in the offing. Some well known brutes are among the loyalists. Nevertheless the conspicuously good "elements"—judged from their past performances—stand by their duty as soldiers and Mexicans: the cultured and gentlemanly Almazan; the gallant and youthful Jaime Carrillo; the rugged and soldierly Miguel Acosta; the sturdy and dependable old agrarian leader from San Luis Potosi, a full-blooded Indian, Saturnino Cedillo.

The revolt had its customary *Plan*—the *"Plan de Hermosillo"*—named from the place of its proclamation, declaring the lofty purpose of its protagonists, denouncing and withdrawing recognition from the constituted authorities, and throwing a sop to the various disgruntled elements whose "adhesion" is sought—as in this case the Catholics. The abolition of the "religious restrictions" was such a gesture.

What next? The rebellion will be put down—its back is already broken. That result was a foregone conclusion. The majority of the army, popular sentiment, and the support of the United States are an invincible trio. Generals, hesitating to see which way the wheel of fortune may turn, will remain loyal. Moreover, it should not be overlooked that officers and men, classified as rebels, feign allegiance to their treacherous commander under compulsion, and take the first opportunity to proclaim their loyalty.

Nevertheless the damage is incalculable. Burned bridges, wrecked railroads, looted banks and wasted villages, heavy tolls imposed on cities within the rebels' territory—the physical destruction is immense. Moreover, long after the rebellion is crushed, its units, broken into guerrilla fragments, will continue to harass and pillage the countryside. The former generals, colonels, etc., then become indistinguishable from common bandits. They were little else even when they wore the uniform. Mexico, struggling desperately to balance its budget, can ill afford such losses. The spiritual damage, the revelation of such widespread disloyalty, the persistence of the chronic military ulcer, the early attempt to nullify the fine purpose of a peaceable and orderly presidential succession—all this represents a serious blow at Mexico's progress.

The real interest lies in the possible solution of the problem. It should long since have been apparent that the whole Mexican military system, predicated on power and perquisites, inevitably leads to such abhorrent exhibitions as this one. If this truth has been apparent to observers, those in charge of Mexico's destinies have either been unaware of it, or tolerant of it, or helpless before the looting of the contemporary *caciques*—the *gen-*

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erales de division, or *de brigada,* who command the thirty-six military headquarters.

In June, 1923, when I had just returned from Vera Cruz, in conversation with President Obregon, I told him of the killing and robbing of peaceable agrarians in that state, of the debauchery and the evident insubordination of the general commanding there, Guadalupe Sanchez, and of the widespread belief there that he would rebel. Obregon scouted the idea that Sanchez would "rise in arms." Yet he it was who initiated the de la Huerta rebellion six months later. The fact is, of course, that the government of both Obregon and Calles—though less in the latter instance—by conniving at or tolerating the purloining practices of the generals, merely stored up trouble for itself which inevitably culminated in rebellion. It may safely be said that, without exception, no *jefe de operacione* has within the last eight years lived on his salary. The best of them have their *negocitos.* These are side-lines, perhaps not illegitimate, when they represent an investment of the general's capital, though obviously that capital was accumulated in the course of the Revolution, for nearly every general began with hardly a *camisa* to his back. But the majority not only engage in illegal traffic, gambling-concession monopolies, houses of ill fame, etc., but use their power for extortion and graft. Social dislocation of any kind—agrarian reform, a rebellion by Catholics—affords peculiarly favorable opportunities. Thus the evils of the Diaz system remain, without the compensating peace which Diaz secured thereby. He gave the generals what they wanted and they were satisfied. Obregon did the same, Calles to a lesser degree—and the generals were not satisfied! The country has paid in peace-times and in time of civil war as well.

Inevitably, the consequence of such chronic and clandestine peace-time faithlessness—to the law of the land which the military are supposed to help maintain, to the government, to the avowed principles of the Revolution—is a transition to overt faithlessness, namely, open rebellion. The difference is only one of slight degree. One might imagine that such a rebellion, by eliminating the overtly faithless generals and presumably leaving a residue of loyal and patriotic leaders, might work some compensating benefit. But no such beneficial purging takes place, if one may judge from recent history. Serrano and Arnulfo Gomez were the federal generals most active in combating the de la Huertista rebellion, in excoriating verbally their erstwhile brother officers and executing such as they captured. Less than four years after, they were in the field against the same government, and it was General Jose Gonzalo Escobar who finally hunted down Gomez, and reported to the capital the execution at the hands of a firing squad of "the traitor." Now Escobar has become the traitor, to whom the same fate will be meted out if he is caught. And there is no assurance whatever that the generals who are now carrying out their duty as soldiers will not be found in the ranks of the next *levantamiento* (uprising). The chance, based on performance, is ten to one that they will be.

Indeed, their own attitude and that of their government in the past has tended to just such an end. The general who remains loyal, no less than the general who does not, expects to profit financially by his course. Obregon showered "gratifications"—sums from twenty-five to fifty thousand pesos—on the leaders who remained with him against de la Huerta. He created fifty-four new generals! Verily, Mexican militarism is a hydra-headed monster. Every insatiable looter eliminated was replaced by another, clamoring to be rewarded for doing his simple duty. And the government complied. Obregon doubtless believed, or felt it necessary to believe, that only in that way could his generals' loyalty be retained. Fatal delusion! On no general did he shower largesse more handsomely than on the profligate Serrano, and Serrano led the next rebellion.

If Mexico is to make any progress against this dreadful scourge, the government must first reform its own attitude. It should, following the present revolt, be wholly parsimonious with promotions. It cannot consistently expect the generals to be more civilized than the supreme command. Obeying orders is the soldier's first duty; loyalty his only course. He should not be promoted or rewarded for it! Dissatisfied? Let him be so—he will thereby demonstrate his own unfitness to continue in the service. Incidentally, what a marvelous opportunity to start disarmament, to reduce the military budget, to cut down the always excessive number of generals, to effect a worth-while retrenchment wholly in line with Mexico's policies of reconstruction!

When one contemplates the utter destructiveness of the army as a national influence, one is inclined to ask why, indeed, it had not better be abolished. Surely it does not exist for defense against an outside foe? Of what use would it be in the event of war with the United States? And when was war with the United States more remote and unthinkable than now, when, under the policy inaugurated by Dwight Morrow, the former "colossus of the North" has been converted into a loyal and sympathetic friend and counselor?

An army has appeared necessary to Mexican administrations in the past for several reasons.

First, there *was* fear of aggression by the United States in the form of intervention. And remembering Henry Lane Wilson, Albert Bacon Fall, and even Charles E. Hughes, that fear was not unjustified. Of course, no Mexican in authority considered that a Mexican army could long withstand the military and naval strength of the United States. But drawing a sharp—and shrewd—distinction between our government and people, between the de-

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signs of a small group of imperialists and the more pacific purposes of the mass of Americans, the Mexicans believed that their army could offer enough effective resistance to enable our public opinion to mobilize in favor of arbitral rather than violent methods of settling whatever differences had arisen.

Second: as long as there has been definite hostility, to the point of armed rebellion, by anti-revolutionary groups, such as that of the *hacendados* against agrarian reform, or of the Catholic clergy and their following against the entire revolutionary program, an army has seemed necessary. It *has* been necessary since the clergy have connived at rebellion for the last two and a half years, even though the military, instead of suppressing rebellion, have in spots kept it alive for personal profit.

Third: with a centralized government like the Mexican, and local authority dubiously established in many states and municipalities, the army has been supposed to function as a national constabulary. It has been useful here and there in suppressing banditry—that is, banditry other than its own.

Of these three justifications for the maintenance of a considerable army, the first has disappeared. Granted that abstract considerations of national pride would seem to require the existence of an army against the Mexicans' traditional foes across the Rio Grande, a realistic appreciation of changing circumstances will show that the attitude of the United States has, in recent crises, been militantly friendly. In the de la Huerta rebellion the Coolidge policy of selling arms to the government, while embargoing their sale to the rebels, saved not merely the Obregon administration, but the Calles succession. Even a strict neutrality at that time in Washington would have meant either a defeat for Obregon, or at least, years of chaos. In the present rebellion, the government would doubtless have won out. But the promptly revealed support of the Hoover administration will not merely shorten the disturbance, but discourage any subsequent outbreak in the next few years. To maintain a military defense against the United States under the circumstances has become a manifest absurdity.

The second justification for the maintenance of an army continues to be the Catholic rebellion, which, of a guerrilla nature for two years, flamed into new intensity following the execution of Toral, and is now merged with the military rebellion, in the common purpose of overthrowing the government. That remains a problem—but surely one that is susceptible of settlement by arbitration. The Mexican clergy may not have learned the obvious folly of their course through their hundred years' experience since Mexican independence, but certain it is that they have lost ground enormously in the two and a half years since they "went on strike." A few more years—and the people will be accustomed to do without priests. A sense of realities, and a truer appreciation of its spiritual function than it has had since the noble missionary days of Las Casas, Gante, Junipero Serra, and Father Kino, would lead the Mexican Roman Catholic hierarchy to submit to the Mexican laws which every other denomination has accepted, in the hope that time, coupled with a much needed reformation within its own clergy, would ameliorate the conditions which it now considers irksome and oppressive.

Third: the formation of a true national constabulary, bent wholly on internal policing, with the resulting diminution of emphasis on the three branches of military service, and more attention to communications, especially through the air, would permit a transformation of the army to lessen the power and menace of the *jefaturas de operaciones*, and those who head them.

Certainly, Mexico cannot lose by applying radical reform to the army. Half-way measures will not suffice. Unless this issue is thus attacked and solved, the nation will face continuing intermittent anarchy and chaos, and recuperation and reconstruction will continue a mirage—always just ahead, always out of reach. Mexican militarism has been for the last decade the nation's supreme menace, and the problem most insistently clamoring for solution. Other problems—also in line with Mexico's effort to liquidate its past and to bring Mexico into line with contemporary civilization—there are, of course, complex and difficult. But definite and gratifying progress has been achieved with each and every one of them. The military evil remains as the obstacle which the nation must overcome if it is to survive and take its place among the nations of earth in the twentieth century. And this problem must be faced now and reform initiated even while—and especially while—the rebellion is in progress. The government's attitude in the next few weeks will have a profound bearing on a future recurrence. It cannot act too drastically and too soon. It can strike now, with the prestige and strength following victory, as it may not be able to do in six months or a year.

ERNEST GRUENING.

Youth and Age

No man of elder years than fifty
Should be empowered with lands and gold.
It turns them shrewd and over-thrifty,
It makes them cruel and blind and cold.

Only the young can without evil
Handle this snake and get no sting,
And toss their riches to the devil,
And think about some wiser thing.

Old men in impotence can beget
New wars to kill the lusty young.
Young men can sing: old men forget
That any song was ever sung.

ARTHUR DAVISON FICKE.

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The Function of the Racketeer

In The New Republic of March 13, 1929, Mr. Lloyd Lewis wrote of the gangster in his relation to bootlegging, particularly in Chicago. There is, however, another side to the gangster's activities, and this, also, is seen more completely developed in Chicago than elsewhere. It is described by Mr. Duffus in the following article.—The Editors.

IT IS reasonable to assume that, no matter how foolish a human institution may seem—and there are few of them that do not have their foolish aspects—there was at one time an apparent reason for its existence. The innate Toryism of the race would guarantee as much, for new institutions must have enough vitality to force their way into being, against the inertia of habit and the wails of special interests. They must seem right, necessary and logical, or they will be squelched before they get started. Thus parliamentary government arose, as every college freshman is aware, out of the need of the English throne for money. There had to be a collection agency; therefore the Plantagenets created one. Having been created, it grew out of all likeness to its earlier self. This, again, is a characteristic of institutions. Rarely, in these well organized modern times, do we see a baby institution, still pink and quivering from the womb. Accordingly it may be worth while to consider that specialized gangster, the racketeer, from this point of view.

Perhaps one has to be at a safe distance from this interesting phenomenon in order to be dispassionate about him. The Chicago tailor, who finds it unnecessary to unlock the front door of his shop some morning because the whole front of the building has already been blown out by a bomb, will be too vexed and frightened to join in our discussion. So will a long list of the racketeer's victims—or, as some of those in the profession would doubtless put it, clients. But the same thing must have been true of some of the burghers who went to the early Parliaments, well knowing that they were there as geese to lay golden eggs for the royal exchequer. To examine the racketeer unemotionally, as we might examine a beetle, does not, of course, imply a condonation of his offenses against society. He is an uncomfortable and often a dangerous neighbor, his morals are likely to be bad, and his primary motive is gain. Nevertheless, we must not confuse him with the ordinary criminal who jimmies open our kitchen door while we are asleep, or holds us up in a dark alley and takes our watch away from us. Unlike the burglar and the highwayman, he has something to sell. He lives by rendering what he considers a service.

Before asking what this service is, let us glance at a typical gang of racketeers. It consists of three or four men and a woman. All, when in public, are quiet and well behaved. Some of them have families, with whom they live in apparent respectability in a peaceful outlying neighborhood. The woman is well dressed, self-effacing; in short, anything but a recognizable creature of the underworld. Once she had occasion to bomb a building which was surrounded by a cordon of police. She walked unassumingly into a near-by building, went up some stairs, took the bomb—or "pineapple"—out of her handbag, threw it with precision from an open window, and walked out again. No policeman not already familiar with her face and record would have dreamed of connecting her with the outrage. This particular gang worked for prices that were often surprisingly low. It would plant a bomb for as little as fifty dollars. If the risk were great, or if considerable time and ingenuity were required, it would, naturally, charge more. A racketeer of this or some similar organization was proud both of his profession and of his skill in it. To a friend whom he could trust, he boasted of having wrecked a certain tailor shop, on the first floor of a building, without causing the slightest damage to the families who occupied the tenements above. Even the tailor, he argued, did not suffer in the long run. His shop was bombed because he had been undercutting the prices which those who hired the bomber thought tailors ought to charge. The lesson he had received would be enough to convince him that undercutting was a bad practice. He would accordingly revert to the higher scale, recoup his losses and be permanently on a higher standard. Why did he cut prices in the first place? Because he feared that if he did not, his competitors would, and that thus he would lose business. The racketeer's function was to see to it that no tailor cut prices. He eliminated, or tried to eliminate, the cut-throat competition which is the bane of small business everywhere.

This use of the racketeer is obviously suggested when an attempt is being made to organize businesses or individuals who, for one reason or another, find it difficult to act as a group. Unskilled laborers, it is pointed out, can rarely be unionized except by intimidation. The racketeer is called in to intimidate them. He beats them up, spoils their work, drops bricks or bits of iron on their heads. Proprietors of laundries, flower-stands, barber-shops, taxi companies, and, of course, speakeasies, are prevented by legal difficulties from overtly establishing price scales to which all must conform. The racketeer is called in. He or his agents visit

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the interested parties and reason with them. They try gentleness first. If gentleness fails, they resort to sterner methods. Ultimately the business in question is stabilized, the wages of honest toil or the profits of management are increased, and there is more money to be taken home on Saturday night to the wives and kiddies. As the racketeer sees it, he has played the part of Santa Claus. He has brought order out of chaos. He has imposed the herd code upon the mavericks.

So much for the racketeer in his simpler and more guileless form. The foregoing description of his activities will suggest that he may either be a hired man for a group of organizers, or that he may operate on his own initiative. Originally it seems pretty certain that racketeers were ordinary gangsters who worked solely for their own pockets and did not rationalize their profession. Gangs were spawned in cities as a natural result of city conditions. Juvenile gangs grew into adult gangs with no jar in the transition. Beginning by levying tribute on fruit-sellers, they extended their operations. Coming into contact with rival gangs, they fought for supremacy in a recognized territory. They thus became a kind of unofficial police, and seemed to conceive of themselves as protecting the business men and other residents of their territory from the violence of gangs from other territories. New York's own Frankie Yale, who met his death last summer at the hands of parties still unknown to the police, was said to have been in the habit of levying tribute in this plausible fashion. Those who refused to pay took risks, and besides were looked upon as unsocial. The good fellows paid and rejoiced in the gang's good will.

But power of this sort was bound to be utilized by those who looked beyond the small change of day-by-day collections. In Chicago, racketeering grew very early into a system of coercion for more elaborate ends. It was a Chicagoan, Big Tim Murphy, if the legend be true, who invented the word "racket," as used in this connection. The preeminence of Chicago is explained, by those who have studied the situation there, as due to the chaotic, factional, and ungovernable nature of the city itself. Unlike New York and Philadelphia, Chicago has never been anybody's private property. No political machine and no faction in a political machine held exclusive sway. Business men, big and little, fought among themselves, instead of, in the modern American way, eliminating fighting by exterminating the strong and absorbing the weak. The races were so evenly balanced that no one or two could dominate. New arrivals, like the Negroes, might get a temporary political and economic foothold because they held the balance of power. The Negro vote, it is said, elected Mayor Thompson. But the Negro politicians quarreled among themselves, and some betrayed their own people. As a result of such conditions, it was difficult to get anything done. The racketeer provided a means.

It was clear that the racketeer would flourish in the control of illegitimate businesses. He or his like have existed for at least a generation in Chicago in connection with prostitution and gambling. He has, it is notorious, made a rich thing out of prohibition. Perhaps liquor is now his principal source of profit. He serves, in that unconstitutional but important industry, a regulative and stabilizing purpose. He is no mere hi-jacker. He not only attends to price-fixing, but he even sees to it that the liquor dispensed under his jurisdiction does not fall below a certain level of vileness. But the importance of his role in the liquor traffic ought not to obscure the part he plays in legitimate business enterprise—if, for the purpose of our argument, it may so be called. The tracing of his connections here is a delicate matter, because the business structure of a great city is extraordinarily complex, and also because the racketeer's influence permeates indirectly a good deal of what it is accurate to describe as respectable business. We may get at the situation by analogy. Except for a few whose supply antedates prohibition, a few more who have personally imported what they drink, and a considerable number who manufacture their alcoholic beverages out of previously innocent materials, every American who drinks is contributing to the support of the army of gangmen and thugs who police the liquor business. There is no getting around this reasoning. An enterprise involving such large sums of money as the supplying of liquor involves must be protected. Contracts must be enforced. Goods must be safeguarded in storage and in transit. The gangster attends to this because the police, in the nature of things, cannot, or at least cannot unless they abdicate their functions as police and themselves become gangsters.

In somewhat the same way, the racketeer plays a part in the operations of legitimate business. He steps in because other agencies have failed. He meets a need for order that otherwise would not be met. To say this may sound like a contradiction in terms, for the racketeer is lawless, and lawlessness is disorder. But the contradiction is only apparent. The lawlessness and violence of the racketeer occurs in the execution of what is really a police function. However deplorable it is that this should be so, nevertheless there seems to be no escape from the fact. He is an enforcer of folkways not yet absorbed into legality. His crimes against property and against the person are the outlaw equivalents of fines, prison sentences, and capital punishment. They are sometimes revolting, but they are not wanton. The more smoothly the system can run, the fewer crimes it feels compelled to commit, the more profit there is in it for those who control it. The most shocking of Chicago's underworld tragedies have occurred when the system itself has broken down. They are a species of civil war, arising from the failure of the racketeer leaders to evolve an authority whose dictates

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would be universally obeyed. The killing of the Moran gangsters on Valentine's Day was due to this cause. Peace may come to Chicago if a really strong leader exterminates or subdues his opponents and monopolizes the whole racketeering traffic. But if this does happen, legitimate business will have to come to terms with him, just as it has with lesser leaders.

The racketeer, in short, is directly related to the grafter who takes his perennial toll, more peaceably, less ostentatiously, in any community controlled by a political machine. If New York, Boston, or Philadelphia were to become the battleground of political factions fairly evenly balanced in strength, the racketeer would undoubtedly be multiplied there overnight. He would become violent, because he would no longer be able to command the organized violence of government. As the situation now exists in those cities, he can be kept comparatively under control; one has to say comparatively, because no American city is quite free of him. Perhaps the real solution to the riddle we have been considering lies in the fact that many activities requiring social action have not yet been so recognized under our political scheme, or, as in the case of the liquor traffic, combinations in restraint of trade, prostitution, and gambling, are forbidden by it. The former category is the more significant for the present argument. Could we, by expanding our social controls, steal the gangster's and racketeer's thunder by performing lawfully some of the functions he performs unlawfully?

The reference is not to bombing, personal assaults and murder. These, as we have seen, are incidental to the racketeer's profession. They would disappear under a system of social control, unless we assume with the anarchists that coercion by the community through government is of a piece with the kind of coercion exercised by the thug and the assassin. It is not the purpose of this article to advocate such control—nor, indeed, to advocate anything whatsoever. But it is plain that the economic life of our cities comes down in the end either to a balance of power or to a monopoly of power, whether this power is applied by government or by private groups and individuals. It is plain, also, that the recognized political machinery covers only a small part of this spread of power. Somebody has to exercise it and somebody does. The resulting system may take the form of magnificent and pervasive corruption, as in Philadelphia, or of violent coercion, as in Chicago. But it is a system, it is an institution. If we don't like it—and let us here go on record, to dispel any lingering suspicion to the contrary, to the effect that it is a thoroughly detestable system—we shall have to invent a better.

R. L. DUFFUS.

Leaning Towers

The Fourth in a Series of Articles on "Men and Machines"

WE COME now to the three great potential dangers of the machine. The robot, the loss of handicraft skill, social standardization, degeneration in the quality of goods, recreation at second hand rather than direct participation, accelerating unemployment—constitute major problems of adaptation and readjustment, but all are in flux, their outlines changing from year to year, while certain modifying forces are at work which may check them from plunging us into disaster.

But I see no modifying forces at all to lessen the danger of mechanized warfare, or of the growing complexity—and hence growing danger—of mechanical specialization, which I shall call technological tenuousness. Nor do I see much assurance that the mounting drain on our natural resources, which the flood of goods promotes, is likely to be compensated for by future discoveries, synthetic or otherwise. On the whole, these three dangers are becoming steadily worse; the more serious because all are long-term bills, and the full value of the instrument has not been assessed. Men have always been loth to bother about bills for vague sums, collectible in the vague future. That is posterity's job; and what, after all, has posterity done for us?

It is true that there are a few peace advocates who are worrying about the next great war—sometimes with a fair amount of publicity. It is true that there is a still smaller and less active group of conservationists who are worrying about oil, lumber, minerals, and coal—with very little publicity since Theodore Roosevelt dropped the subject. Neither of these problems has really been driven into the public consciousness: people think of them as worthy causes that deserve an occasional contribution, like homes for poor widows. For every article in the newspapers picturing the impending smash of the next war, I find a dozen jauntily featuring the latest super-dreadnought and anti-aircraft guns—and the ratio shows where the public interest really lies.

The threat of over-specialization, in the sense that we are increasingly dependent for our food, water, and other necessities on a mechanical process, which only a few technicians understand in detail and no one understands entirely, has rarely been

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touched upon—let alone realized in the public consciousness. We turn a faucet, and water gushes out. If it doesn't, we telephone indignantly to the plumber, who fiddles with a wrench and makes it gush. Where it comes from, and how, we neither know nor care. We would as readily think of the sun standing still—more readily, in fact, for the city people seldom see the face of the sun—as of water not flowing from faucets after the proper telephoning and tinkering. Yet a handful of technicians could bring just such a miracle to pass in a few hours, and before connections could be reestablished by amateur engineering—if, indeed, they could be reëstablished—we should run to the scum of the salt water tides, mumbling with thirst.

An engineer once explained to me how a hundred key men, operating its veins of water, power, gas, sewage disposal, milk supply, and communications, could snuff out the life of a great city, almost as neatly as though every crevice had been filled with poison gas. Even in the country, with the growing use of electric power, the telephone, gasoline, and imported food stuffs, we lean heavily on machines we do not understand. When a fuse blows out in my suburban home, we can neither see, cook, nor keep warm. If the current is shut off in the depth of winter, the house becomes uninhabitable within a few hours. The machine has presented us with a central nervous system, protected with no spinal vertebræ, lying almost naked for the cutting. If for one reason or another it is cut, we face a terrifying, perhaps a mortal, crisis. All previous cultures have thrived with hardly any central nervous system at all; they could be destroyed only village by village, for each was largely self-sustaining.

Two leaning towers will be discussed in this article: the tenuousness of our technical structure, and the drain on natural resources.

Most men make little more attempt to understand their environment than is forced upon them in making a living from it. In a pioneer community, a man must know about weather, seasons, crops, domestic animals, wild animals, trees and plants of economic value, textile making, smithing, carpentering, masonry, firearms, trails, water courses, pasturage, and so on. The daily obstacles to be overcome tend not only to make him wise in an inarticulate sort of way, but also courageous, handy, self-reliant, and independent. Of course, if the obstacles are too great, they may brutalize and degrade him.

Our White Plains book-keeper, on the other hand, has no such educative forces in his morning and evening trip between his home and the office. Survival for him depends on his ability to dodge motor cars; to read time tables, warning signals, and the labels on packaged foods; on the use of money and the telephone; the ordering of repair mechanics; and on certain details in the theory of double-entry accounting. He may, and usually does, learn more than this, but anything extra is really a pastime, seldom having anything to do with the specific conditions of his environment or any place in his scheme of survival. He may exercise his muscles a little, because he has read in the newspaper that that is good for sedentary workers, but the exercise he gets is usually like that observed by the editor of The New Yorker in one of his more reflective moods:

> At the Electrical Show we saw how the need for out-door life had been entirely obviated. For the sun you substitute a lamp; for a horse you ride an electric animal in the safety of your bathroom; for wind and snow and the buffeting of the elements, you place a strap around your belly and are electrically invigorated. All this is supposed to make a man of you. Unfortunately the Electrical Show came to town at the same time as the Rodeo. We went directly from the one to the other. Puffy salesmen, sitting on electrical horses beneath electric suns, talking sales talk; lean cowboys, riding the horns of flesh-and-blood steers, saying nothing. . . . The contrast duly noted.

Most of our clerk's attention is spent in getting enough money into his fingers to "maintain his position." Getting money requires a specialized job: one tiny part of the great process of meat packing, textile manufacturing, steel making, department-store merchandizing, international banking. To draw his weekly pay check, he need understand only this fraction—and check his invoices, or add up his columns, with reasonable accuracy. It is not surprising that he lacks the self-reliance and handiness, the inarticulate basic wisdom, which are the normal heritage of the pioneer, the resident in a self-sustaining village, or any peoples in close touch with nature. The modern slum dweller and industrial worker are in a similar predicament. They need more courage than the clerk, but perhaps even less knowledge of the forces that control their environment.

The case is not necessarily serious, however, so long as machine civilization continues to function. These people have no immediate need for more knowledge. As for the degeneration of character, the bright face of danger persists on any city street and in most factories and outside construction jobs, as the accident figures show; while the sense of power that comes from driving a motor car has done much to stiffen modern backbones. Also we are always pursuing a witch called Success, who, if she does nothing else, at least stimulates the adrenalin. I am not so much concerned about the character of a shipping clerk with a line of wise cracks and a Chevrolet, as I am about his ignorance of the environment which furnishes food and shelter to himself, and oil and gasoline to his car. Just what is he going to do if the machine stops? How does he know that it will not stop? Whom shall he find to repair it if it does stop in any basic way? The situation is not entirely new, for in earlier

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civilizations, slaves rather than machines acted as a cushion between citizens and the means of their subsistence; but it is serious enough. Our connection with the realities of our environment is far more tenuous than was ever the case in Imperial Rome.

Technology is developing at an incredible pace. In a single week I have listed as many as fourteen important inventions and discoveries. Private interests are continually capitalizing these inventions and introducing them into the industrial structure, often with the formula kept secret. Public safety is usually a minor consideration in such introductions. And if you doubt this, ask the gas company to give you a list of the deadly gas stoves and heaters they are trying to eliminate from the market. Safety is the business of public inspectors, whose fields are limited; and many of them, alas, have their price.

We draw up to a filling station and order gasoline, which the bright sign assures us will give more miles to the gallon. Some time later we hear of workers in Bayonne, New Jersey, dying from the effects of manufacturing this same gas. We admire the figures on our watch which gleam at night, only to pick up the paper and learn that the inventor of radium paint has been killed by the effects of his own discovery. Who is watching all these new products that are so gaily advertised; and all these interlocked pipes, wires, rails, conduits, tunnels, services, which are about us in ever greater complexity, and upon which our life depends? Nobody is watching them except in the most haphazard way. Adam Smith's doctrine of the "invisible hand" leaves such observation largely to private enterprise, and private enterprise has no desire to inflate pay-rolls with more than the minimum number of inspectors, and no desire to cooperate with brother interests in setting up a clearing house of knowledge. Such an undertaking would cost money, and what is infinitely worse, give trade secrets into alien hands. It is nobody's business to know, and nobody does know. Certain services, say, municipal fire departments, are well inspected and well protected; for the rest, we can only hope for the best.

In addition to mazes of cables, mains, sewers, subways and mail tubes, underground, we find various services upon the surface which are equally important if not so mysterious. Bridges and causeways which admit traffic, particularly foodstuffs, to the city, come under this head. So do docking facilities, railroad switch-yards and their signals, surface and elevated transit lines, the organization of milk and ice supply, fire-fighting apparatus, street traffic, particularly delivery by truck, and street traffic control by signal lights and officers; health and hospital services for the control of infectious diseases; garbage collection—a very tender nerve; burial services; elevator services—without which hardly more than 10 percent of our normal business could be carried on; street cleaning and snow disposal; building inspection for innumerable safety provisions including ventilation, fire hazard, and proper construction materials; smoke and dust abatement services; factory inspection—and presently the provisioning of landing fields, and the control of communication by air.

There is hardly an item on either the subterranean or the surface list which is not cardinal to the continued existence of our clerk and all his fellow citizens. If one prime nerve is cut for any length of time, his environment will start to collapse, leaving him as helpless as a rabbit in a trap. Furthermore, so interlocked is the whole system that the snapping of one nerve is almost sure to result in the rupture of others. If electric power goes, the whole city is plunged into darkness, every motor stops, and subways, surface cars, elevated trains, water pumps, fire signals, hospitals, elevators, refrigeration, incoming food and milk supplies—all are thrown into confusion.

Who understands the technical functioning of these services, and their interlocking relationships? Where are the men to replace the handful of experts who might wreck their own service, hardly knowing the extent of the ruin it might cause? When no one man in the Telephone Company understands the latest dial system—it takes about five of them to master it—where is the central intelligence to nurse a great city through a nervous breakdown? Obviously, nowhere. What is worse, the problems involved are far too complicated to be grasped by any one mind, or by any small group. It would take a very considerable intelligence service, functioning continuously, with a large clerical force and elaborate filing system, to provide any sort of insurance against a metropolitan calamity. I am not sure that adequate insurance does not demand special educational courses for the entire population in the broad outlines of the problem, together with instruction in specific tasks in case of crisis—a sort of general civic mobilization. I do not necessarily recommend such a program; but am only speculating as to what adequate insurance under a machine civilization entails. My recommendations would run to more spacious, less populous cities, without bowels riven with ten separate circulatory channels.

You may object that no great disaster has yet overtaken a modern metropolis. With the exception of Tokio, this is true. We must remember, however, that this whole development is very recent, and provides us with no adequate historical testing time as yet. Day by day the complexity, and hence the potential danger, accelerates; materials and structures ceaselessly and silently deteriorate. One may look for some very ugly happenings in the next ten years.

We have already had reasonably specific experience with a kindred urban problem—that of the one-industry town. When the mill owners of New Bedford recently declared a wage reduction, and

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their operatives went on strike, a most extraordinary thing happened. Almost to a man, the city supported the strikers. Newspapers, shopkeepers, landlords, bankers, insurance men—everybody lined up behind them. Because their hearts were pure? Of course not. Because New Bedford depends exclusively on its cotton mills and, with the workers on the streets, there was no buying power left in the town. Business came suddenly to a standstill. The same thing happened, in a less complete way, when Ford changed from Model T to Model A, throwing 60,000 men out of work and clogging the trade and production of Detroit. Lawrence, Haverhill, Gary, Passaic—and many more that could be mentioned both here and abroad—are one-industry towns. If any breakdown occurs in that industry, the whole city faces depression, misery, even starvation. The factor of tenuousness applies not only to cities.

> If the 200,000 trained engine-men were blotted out of existence tomorrow, the social and industrial life of the nation would be paralyzed. Mines, factories, and public utilities would cease production. Food supplies would accumulate remote from the great markets. Babies would die while men and women fought for bread and meat. It would take not months, but years to train men necessary to restore the constant reliable flow of commerce.

If steamships filled with food ceased landing in English harbors, Mr. Philip Gibbs gives the population three months to starve to death. As it is, a million men, women, and children in the mining districts are today on the brink of starvation because internal combustion engines, hydraulic turbines, and a declining foreign trade, have reduced the demand for British coal. Over a quarter of a million miners will never enter the pits again. California is almost exclusively dependent upon oil for her power. If the oil supply were cut off, she would have the utmost difficulty in shifting to a coal basis.

Machinery without lubrication is unthinkable. Modern industry is built upon petroleum lubricants. According to Mr. G. W. Stocking there is no quantitative substitute for mineral lubricating oils. A sufficient supply of vegetable oils would require such an acreage as to make serious inroads on the food supply. Competent engineers have given American petroleum from six to twelve more years before it is exhausted. Stretch this period with imported supplies to twenty years. What are our machines going to do when it runs out? I am not particularly reassured by a cheery "something will be found."

> Wherever mechanical industry has taken decisive effect . . . the community lives from hand to mouth in such a way that its livelihood depends on the effectual working of its industrial system from day to day. . . . By themselves alone, the technicians can, in a few weeks, effectually incapacitate the country's productive industry. . . . No one who will dispassionately consider the technical character of this industrial system will fail to recognize that fact.

Mr. Veblen estimates the number of men necessary to do this at "no more than a minute fraction of 1 percent of the population."

England had a taste of technological tenuousness in the General Strike of 1926. Fortunately for the government, the basic nerves were never really cut. Had they been—say, the water supply of London—the government would have been forced to its knees in a few hours. Some day an embittered labor movement, or even a small key labor group, may really cut a nerve. Some day an earthquake, which would not do appreciable damage in a village, may cut a bundle of nerves in a metropolis. On that day, our White Plains clerk will discover that faucets do not manufacture water, nor delicatessen stores food.

The menace of technological tenuousness takes two forms: first, there is the possibility of dramatic action by man or nature; second, and I think even more serious, the piling up, one upon the other, of technical services, which nobody understands or tries to understand in any synthetic way, may result in a natural collapse, without help from man or nature. The standardization and simplification movement is facing certain minor aspects of this problem, but I notice that it is not diminishing traffic congestion much on Fifth Avenue.

You may remember the lawn of the suburban family piled high with its annual quota of coal, iron ore, lumber, and lead. The machine is swallowing natural resources at a fantastic, an inconceivable rate. It has used up more oil in the past ten years than had been consumed before that since the beds were laid down, some millions of years ago. It has used up more minerals since 1900 than in all previous history.

A good half of this volume is wasted in exploitation, another generous share falls by the wayside in fabrication, leaving a net product for consumption, of which a large part, as we have seen in earlier articles, is junk. In other words, we could live just as well by a sensible exploitation of about one-quarter of the present tonnage shovelled and pumped from the crust of the earth.

To the time of Watt, men lived chiefly on the interest from their store of natural resources. Increasingly since 1800, and for the past generation with blind fury, it has been tearing into its capital on a scale that precludes replacement. All the western nations have proved their fitness to be called prodigal sons; but the gayest, most light-hearted, most charmingly rattle-brained of the whole family is certainly the United States of America. This stripling lights his cigarette with a million dollars' worth of coal, and throws the match to kindle a million-dollar forest fire. "Our habit of stepping on the gas," says George Otis Smith, "has brought the mineral industry close to the danger line." And he adds that a nation's wealth may also be measured by its power to last. The rate at which a spendthrift divorces himself of his capital has ever been a poor measure for the

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value of an estate. We are already beginning to import raw materials in increasing amounts, and before we know it, our sometime economic independence will have run its course, we shall be drawn willy-nilly into world economy, and the delightful pastime of bullying our neighbors because of the iron, coal, and oil under our feet will come to an end.

A distinction must be drawn between resources that will grow again, and those that, once used, are gone forever. Lumber is an example of the first, and copper of the second. A further distinction lies between wasting assets whose supply is virtually unlimited, like stone or clay, and those that will be exhausted within a calculable period, like oil. Stone need not concern us; lumber may be brought back by a great and costly system of afforestation, in which timber culture is substituted for the present practice, which has been called timber mining; but oil will end, and take with it the food of half a billion horses.

Waste is an ugly thing in itself. But in the case of a deposit good for a thousand years or more, it means hardly more than exasperation at the stupidity of the procedure. In the case of oil, which may not last at negotiable prices until 1940, exasperation, to an imaginative mind, can only give place to horror. Those who have the oil supply in charge rear a vast technology on petroleum, make it indeed the outstanding exhibit of the Power Age, and then ruthlessly kick it out from under us. Something will be found, we are told—shale, bitumin sands, alcohol from potatoes, gasoline from coal, sea water, something—"the miracles of science are in their infancy." I know all about the miracles of science—and some of its majestic failures—and, I ask, what precisely, and at what cost, will be found?

The silence is oppressive.

STUART CHASE.

(Mr. Chase's fifth article, entitled "The Balance Sheet," will be published next week.)

Washington Notes

NOW that it has really started to function, the judicious generally concede, I think, that the Hoover Cabinet is a step up. Mellowed by the absence of Congress, soothed by the departure of the thrifty Calvin, buoyed by the hope of better days, I am myself prepared to go at least that far, prudently leaving, however, the customary number of fire escapes, rope ladders, loopholes and trap doors, without which the mortality among political writers would be approximately 98 percent. With this fact clearly in view, I cautiously state that there are undoubtedly some members of this Cabinet for whom not many balanced persons will get red in the face cheering. Further, there is at least one furtive, slinking fellow in the batch, and there are one or two with more reputation than foundation, who will certainly disappoint some of their enthusiastic friends and make heavy the heart of the President who saddled himself with them. Always there is one such, in a Cabinet, usually more than one. No Cabinet is 100 percent, and it would be silly to expect it. None the less, individually and collectively, the present group of counselors grade better than the aggregation recently inflicted on us. And they would have been still better, there seems sound reason to believe, had the "Chief" (as the attachés, near attachés, former attachés and future attachés of the Hoover person do so love to call him)—had the Chief had a wholly free hand and not been compelled by circumstances to carry over two eminent representatives of the old regime.

One of these, for example—Mr. Davis—is the shallowest member of the new Cabinet; the other, Mr. Mellon, is the most hollow. But for his golden aura he would be its lightest weight. There is no space here to indulge further in the fascinating pastime of comparative analysis, but it is interesting to note that there is in this administration nothing remotely like the awe and admiration of Mr. Mellon that there was in the last. Partly, of course, this is due to the increase in size of the White House incumbent, partly to the pathetic exhibition of eagerness upon Mr. Mellon's part to hold on to his job, thus dissipating completely the silly fiction about the sacrifices he had made to serve his country, and partly to the present practically depleted condition of the Treasury, which, together with the price of government securities, is certainly no tribute to Mills-Mellon management, though the time has not yet come when criticism of it can be made really to stick. But it will, friends—it will.

In the meantime it is becoming increasingly apparent to the most casual observer in Washington that the new administration will be the most completely one-man affair we have had since Woodrow Wilson left the White House. Under both Harding and Coolidge there were members of the Cabinet who overshadowed the Chief Executive, who were more impressive intellectually, professionally, physically and in other ways. There are none such in this Cabinet. So far as this Cabinet is concerned, the thinking and the talking will be done by the President, and by no one else. Already that has been made abundantly plain, particularly on the talking end. It will be made more so, I think, as the days go by. Just as last spring Mr. Hoover put his commodious, airy and well furnished mind on the problem of practical politics, in the last few weeks he has put it on the subject of administration publicity, coming to the completely logical conclusion that administration publicity is essentially presidential publicity, and that presidential publicity, to be of real value, must be handled by the President or by someone working so close to him as to amount to the same thing.

To this end there has percolated through the Cabinet the idea that, so far as this administration is concerned, except on matters of routine detail, Mr. Hoover considers himself the proper source of information, the sole person qualified to reveal publicly departmental policies, changes and programs. This notion, I have reason to believe, was conveyed delicately but with sufficient distinctness to make it absolutely certain that there should be no misunderstanding on the subject—and there is none. I am credibly informed that one of the most effective methods adopted by

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Mr. Hoover to get this message clearly across the plate with his cabinet members was to say, with apparent casualness, to each individual that the main reason he had not appointed a certain man was because he felt that that individual could not refrain from talking when he ought not to talk, that it was manifestly impossible to live happily with a Cabinet, any member of which had an irresistible disposition to disclose what should be held confidential, that the one intolerable quality in a cabinet member was "leakiness." Such a dissertation could not fail to impress the most obtuse. It has. It was equivalent to informing each of his counselors that he was expected to work, not talk.

There isn't any doubt that they got the idea—all of them. Mr. H. Hoover made sure of that before he took up the other problem of establishing satisfactory relations with the "corps of correspondents." This, as I intimated some weeks ago, he had no difficulty whatever in doing, despite the commotion among them caused by some hot hearts that still beat for honest Al, and a sprinkling of individuals whose fierce revolutionary natures keep them in a constant state of turbulence brought about by their vigilant alertness to preserve the "freedom of the press," whatever that may be. At any rate Herbert took them all into camp—Smithites, revolutionists, radio announcers, plain and fancy reporters. At the very first press conference he soothed their sensitive souls, spoke of the great power and influence of the press, touched upon the dignity and importance of the correspondents, expressed a desire for cordial coöperation and the placing of his conferences with them upon a "genuinely constructive basis." Having administered this sugary dose to the "corps" as a whole, which, it may be said, it lapped up and applauded—almost cheered—the far-sighted Herbert, with customary efficiency, proceeded to get down to specific details with a select committee, the net result of which was the rearrangement of the White House press conferences along lines previously planned by the President in a way to permit him to gain the maximum advantage with a minimum of annoyance. The interesting part of the whole proceeding is that "the boys" have the naïve notion that the new rules resulted from a joint meeting of their own minds with that of Mr. Hoover. There was in this matter exactly one mind. Long ago that mind decided what it wanted. Quite easily it got it.

Wholly aside from the question whether the personal hostility of newspaper men to the President of the United States is more important to him or to them, the quick and capable way in which Mr. Hoover handled a situation that had caused a great deal of talk in Washington and no little alarm among the more timid of his entourage, is illuminating. It was also a surprise. It has been held that while Hoover is always at home in dealing with a concrete problem, no matter how complex, in the more personal relations, involving tact, he is invariably at a loss. Perhaps it is so, but it certainly did not appear to be in this case. If Mr. Hoover is as successful in straightening out the inevitable tangles with recalcitrant and revolutionary members of Congress as he was with the "corps of correspondents," his success is going to be something to gaze upon reverently. Not that I think it will. This was a ridiculously easy proposition. The advantages were all on his side, and what he said had to go. The fact that he sugar-coated his program and let it appear a matter of mutual arrangement is indicative of a tact of which he was not suspected. But it will require more than tact to get his way in the Senate. In the House, I think, he will have little trouble. They are relatively easy to handle there. Members of the House are reëlected every two instead of every six years. Not many care to put themselves in opposition to the presidential power.

In the Senate, however, there are a number of men who were elected at the same time as Mr. Hoover, and for a longer term. Their feeling of independence is larger, their fear of the presidential power much less, their eagerness to follow not nearly so pronounced. He will have some trouble in the Senate in the coming session, which was wished on him. He will find tact ineffective. He will find reason and logic of no avail. It will be extremely interesting to see, when he reaches that point—as he surely will within a very short time—whether he will resort to strong-arm methods. I hope so. I should love to see how quickly some of our Republican senatorial bullies and bluffs, who have contracted a chronic swagger, will wilt and quit under real pressure. For the past five years they have been insolently contemptuous of the White House wishes. No one can tell whether Mr. Hoover will use the presidential fist or not, and there are plenty who say he lacks courage, that he will not fight. There are others who believe he can and will hit hard when the time arrives. They will have a fine chance to see before long. No one thinks it possible for this extra session, in which there is to be considerable tariff tinkering, to go to a finish without a certain number of Republican Senators openly or covertly arraying themselves against the Hoover wishes. That is sure to come, and when it does, we shall know whether we have a President in the White House who can swing a club or not. Personally, like all safe observers, I am for the club swinger.

Washington. T. R. B.

The Duse Memorial

FOR once the shining reports of a benefit are true entirely: the event at the Ethel Barrymore Theater on Sunday two weeks ago was a brilliant affair, so much so that it had to be repeated the following Sunday. The cause for which the benefit was given was to raise money toward a foundation for the Eleonora Duse Fellowship, whose purpose, in turn, is the sending of American students to Italy in exchange for students coming here.

The scheme for this benefit had more sequence of idea than most; it presented a series of love scenes from four centuries. The program began with the forest scene between Orlando and Rosalind, and after that the courtship scene of Henry the Fifth and his French princess. The proposal scene from Congreve's "The Way of the World," the elopement plotting from Dion Boucicault's "London Assurance," the meeting of Peter Ibbetson and Mary, Duchess of Towers, the last act of "La Dame aux Camélias," the scene with the book from d'Annunzio's "Francesca da Rimini," a scene from "Candida" and a scene from "Caprice," Sil-Vara's play at the Theater Guild, made up the rest of the list. The players included Miss Ruth

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Draper, Miss Elsie Ferguson, Miss Ethel Barrymore, Miss Eva le Gallienne, Miss Constance Collier, Miss Lynn Fontanne, Miss Mary Ellis, Madame Maria Ouspenskaya, Miss Beatrice Lillie, Mr. Alfred Lunt, Mr. Basil Sydney, Mr. Glenn Anders, Mr. Henry Daniel and others, in major and minor roles. A décor of considerable elaboration was provided, black curtains in a permanent proscenium, within which were shown screen settings, furniture and properties, and admirable costumes, all specially created for the occasion by Miss Gertrude Newell, Mr. Robert Edmond Jones, Mr. Lee Simonson, Mr. Raymond Sovey, Mr. James Reynolds and other designers. M. George Barrère conducted the orchestra.

One may not look a gift horse in the mouth, doubtless, and criticism of the various performances has no special place here—for the most part the playing was such as might make us proud of our American stage—but certain reflections follow in the train of such an event as this, and may be set down.

The splendid mechanical proficiency of our theater, the spirit of whipping things up to a high running order. These nine numbers went off without a hitch. And, while we are making this gesture to the Italians, we may indulge ourselves in a whispered hint—in an Italian theater the actors after fifty performances are still leaning on the prompter. Duse's company, with only five plays to do, knew none of them by heart; and once in Florence I was present at a performance of Euripides' "Bacchæ" by a famous company, in which the leading lady, after two weeks' rehearsing, knew nothing to say but Evoe! and Alas!

The great difference between short stage passages and long performances. Some of these players who did capitally in single scenes from dramatists removed in time and style from our present theater would come off far less well in the whole play from which their scene was taken. This is partly a matter of the mind, in the sense of an overseeing element in which all the parts of a work of art are perceived and given to us in their due relation among themselves, so that the character and meaning of the whole is solidly achieved. But even more it is a matter of technique, and especially of practice and routine. To compass a sustained rendering of a style nothing can prevail for any length of time but a solid technical thoroughness. For short intervals it is different. Be not deceived. We are a smart race, but not that smart.

How bright and delicious Shakespeare can be, so often better—however strong our wills to it—than we could remember! How fresh, witty, native, rugged Anglo-Saxon he is, our blood and bone, the marrow of it! Better at the native and homely rugged than the roughest modern specialists. What variety and whimsy! What a hard, individual headiness! How the windbags have hurt him!

The new willingness to be broad, not to say smutty, in our theater is a great help to certain sides of Shakespeare. It brings back into his lines some of the Elizabethan breadth and gusto and staunch wit and savor of life. This is balanced by the new unwillingness to be ornate, artificial, elaborate, which takes away from Shakespeare's lines much of their splendor and richness, and diminishes the Renaissance substance of his art.

Instead of full texts it might, on the contrary, be highly desirable to give cut versions of Shakespeare, in some cases, even, a program of scenes from diverse plays. In his work, as in the Renaissance painters, there is much that belongs to his time and its preferences, often motivations and practices that no longer have their appeal and so fade off into forms in art that we no longer respond to as vehicles for thought and feeling. This same is true of Congreve, who lived and wrote on so much thinner a plane than Shakespeare. "The Way of the World" was not in its own day, and has never been since, a satisfactory drama as a whole, nor one with theatrical security. But this one scene between Millamant and Mirabell—there are other fine scenes in the play, of course—is complete in itself, especially if another cut of it were used from that for this program at the Ethel Barrymore. For character under a veneer of elegance and *tour de force,* for passion under the mask of wit and audacious gallantry, it is unequalled anywhere that I know in all drama, and for prose rhythm it is not equalled in the English theater. Not even Shakespeare's prose, however beautiful, rich and willful, comes off so perfectly throughout the whole scene.

How Congreve in these "manners" passages derives from Ben Jonson and Plautus and so back to the Greeks!

The matter of Italian studies for our youth. In the first place it must be said that nowadays in our American centers nobody cares whether you live abroad or have studied abroad or not. This is due partly to an increase in ignorance, partly to one in knowledge: ignorance of what there is to learn and what there is abroad to assimilate; knowledge of what there is to forget, and what there is at home to find out. It is both a good and a bad sign.

The old tendency with us was to go to France to study, following the luster of the French star in the eighteenth century, and also responding to the tact and wisdom in the French management of this matter of *rapport* between France and America. For slight talents Paris is the place. They may learn there how to give to their work and thought a degree of elegance, or tradition, or at least tactful arrangement and adaptation; and they may, if they have the knack, pick up an ability to theorize intelligently about art, or to prattle about esthetics, or to talk nonsense about beauty and style—which one of the three, or all, will depend on the individual student. Just as Paris is believed by many to be the most beautiful city in the world, and is so explained by the French, and has indeed a certain urban, discreet mind to its plan, a certain vivacity to its aspect, and limited elegance to its detail, though for certain less demonstrable but more lovely, profound or soaring qualities, Rome, Edinburgh, New York or Budapest knock it into a cocked hat; and just as the French discourse about *beauté* makes such as see through others' eyes or through the eyes of words rather than their own eyesight think French women, who, unadorned and stripped of varied artifice, are apt to be rather more than plain, the most beautiful in the world, so Paris and the French quality are the supreme right for certain talents. For real talents, natures seeking a deep and fecund development, Italy comes first. Italy is a source, a well of vitality. The Italian nature combines lack

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of taste with a wonderful and immediate recognition of inspiration and a wealth of unacademic fertility. This latter kind of student needs his stay in Italy first, and then afterward he may perfect himself in France. Once an old violin-maker in Venice said to me, "The Italians create, the French finish."

A good deal of the Victorian reverence for Italy was based on stuff which the Italians regard as slush, lies and sentiment, and which the modern Italian is rather overanxious to combat, even to the point of professing the rawest ardor for the bare and mechanical in other civilizations. But the intelligent American student, going now to Italy, in the light of our new confidence in things American, the modern tendencies in art and the freedom from old traditions, might derive from it what the great classics in English literature went to the Italian for: fundamental forms in art and thought, a genius for naturalness in combinations, and such an abundance of art as can bring it into a simple, direct, exalted and matter-of-fact relation to life.

Finally, it is good to see the Italians come off so happily. Other races have been celebrated in our midst with many honors, donations and fanfares. But Italy does not sell herself very well to us, partly because the Italians are not boasters, partly because so many of them in our country are simple people from Sicily and the South, partly because more forethought, pains and tact might have been used in promoting Italian causes. Mr. Lauro de Bossis, the new secretary of the Italy American Society, may well be proud of this occasion: it had great style and air.

STARK YOUNG.

The De Luxe Picture Palace

THE LEGITIMATE theater, usually known as "Broadway," is in a panic today, with many of its temples dark and many of its priests and vestals rushing about the streets of the walled city, crying out that the movie vandals are at the gates of the citadel at last.

To hear them wail, one would suppose that the old battle between the drama and the films is about to result in the extinction of art, culture and the revered British accent. The movies, armed now with new electrical catapults and strange talking devices, have all but taken the modern Rome. Years ago, out in the provinces, the films conquered the legitimate theaters of "the road." Not only that: the barbarians clubbed and chased those pious missionaries, the Chautauquans. Next they captured Broadway's strolling half-brothers, the vaudevillians, enslaving them to work four and five times a day in the pagan temples which the vandals have erected everywhere. And now, as the Visigoths prepare to take the capital, it sickens the priests and vestals to discover that the cold-blooded bankers of the citadel itself are financing the invasion.

Superficially, it is the advent of talking pictures, backed by enormous capital, that has caused the panic. In reality it is the success in New York of that provincial institution, the big moving-picture theater, that is responsible.

Only in the past year has Broadway awakened to the fact that the colossal film house, known to the trade as the "de luxe" theater, has been as successful in New York as it was for a decade previous in the "sticks." Ten years ago, when the Capitol Theater, itself immense in size, opened on Broadway, the legitimate drama viewed it as a sort of amiable behemoth, likely to attract little more than the chronic movie-going public. Which was about what happened. But the Capitol was not a typical "de luxe" film house, as that institution has since become standardized over the country. Two years before the Capitol opened, the progenitor of the now accepted type was built in Chicago, a 2,200-seat theater, the Central Park, which some determined and imaginative boys from the near-by Ghetto—the Balaban brothers and Sam Katz—had started, as an experiment upon which they were willing to risk their combined savings. As though inspired by the spirit of audacity which seems contagious in Chicago, they planned their new theater on an unprecedented scale, lined its interior with crimson velvet and marble, adorned the walls with paintings, and filled the lobbies with uniformed and bowing ushers. In a swirl of color and splendor, they experimented with prologues, singers, dancers in diaphanous robes, and "presentations"—in fact, almost everything that the most gorgeous of the 6,000-seat "de luxe" houses offer, on a still vaster scale, today.

As it turned out, magnificence paid well, and, by 1921, the Balabans and Katz had added three other, similar theaters to their list. Presently the clink of money dropping into their box-offices had become such a siren song that moving-picture exhibitors over the country were deserting the old-time "nickelodeons," to make round eyes at the finer and bigger things themselves. By 1926, almost every large city had its "de luxe" house, seating from 2,500 to 4,500 people. Small picture houses died around them like flies. In cities of less than 200,000 inhabitants, the legitimate theaters wilted; vaudeville houses closed or added pictures; Chautauqua circuits shrank.

But each year the "de luxe" houses were more thronged. That pioneer, the Central Park, played to 750,000 patrons in its first year. In 1928, the circuit of Chicago theaters, to which it still belongs, had expanded to include twelve, the other eleven all larger than their progenitor, and had checked over 30,000,000 admissions in the year.

Most of these 30,000,000, of course, were women and children; perhaps not more than 25 percent of all the patrons were men, and many of these were there chiefly in the role of escort. What had the Chicago pioneers put into their temple that was so seductive to American women?

In the dim auditorium which seems to float in a world of dream and where the people brushing her elbows on either side are safely remote, an American woman may spend her afternoon alone. Romantic music, usually played with a high degree of mechanical excellence, gives her a pleasant sensation of tingling. Her husband is busy elsewhere; and on this music, as on a mildly erotic bridge, she can let her fancies slip through the darkened atmosphere to the screen, where they drift in rhapsodic amours with handsome stars. In the isolation of this twilit palace, she abandons herself to these adventures with a freedom that is impossible in the legitimate theater, where the lights are brighter and the neighboring seat-holders always on the edge of her vision: the blue dusk of the "de luxe" house

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has dissolved the Puritan strictures she had absorbed as a child.

All of this splendor has been planned for her delight, and with a luxuriance that she had imagined was enjoyed only in Cleopatra's court, oriental harems, or Parisian and Viennese society. She strolls voluptuously through lobbies and foyers that open into one another like chambers in a maze; her feet sink in soft rugs, she is surrounded by heavy Renaissance tables, oil paintings, and statues of nudes. She enjoys the sense of leading a sophisticated, continental life, with none of the practical risks. For she sees church members and respectable householders savoring the same delights about her.

When she goes home that evening, she will perhaps clean spinach and peel onions, but for a few hours, attendants bow to her, doormen tip their hats, and a maid curtsies to her in the ladies' washroom. She bathes in elegance and dignity; she satisfies her yearning for a "cultured" atmosphere. Even the hush that hangs over the lobbies means refinement to her: voices that have been raucous on the street drop, as they drop on entering a church.

When she takes her seat, she is further flattered by the same colorful magnificence on the stage as in the lobby. Each week the production department of Publix Theaters —an affiliation of thirty-five of the largest "de luxe" houses, with several hundred smaller ones—sends out, from the Paramount Theater in New York, a traveling company of twenty to thirty performers. This show is guaranteed thirty-five weeks' "time" before it returns to the home studio. It has lured such stage producers as John Murray Anderson away from the legitimate theater; it once hired Paul Whiteman and his band for fifty-two weeks, at $12,500 a week; it has captured Ted Lewis, Nora Bayes, Gilda Gray, Van and Schenck, John Philip Sousa, Ben Bernie, and a dozen others. Painters and sculptors, like Frank Cambria, have turned to producing these big standard presentations. In fact, the "de luxe" theaters, with their deep stages, can manage productions on the same scale as grand opera—but they are too crafty to try anything more than one-fifth as long. In this field, Cambria and "Roxy" are revered as the pioneers and leaders.

Some of the largest theaters, such as Roxy's in New York, the Chicago in Chicago, and the Fox in Detroit, have proudly supplied their own programs exclusively—musical spectacles, with ballets, choruses, burnings of Moscow, and forest fires—instead of relying on traveling units. This may mean that the days of the old stage-band policy are over; and that we shall see the orchestra promoted to the stage and conducted by an affable gentleman with more personality than musical attainments, who introduces each vaudeville act with a wise-crack designed to make the audience feel that its royal favor is now humbly, but expensively, courted.

The royal favor of democracy it is: for in the "de luxe" house every man is a king and every woman a queen. Most of these cinema palaces sell all their seats at the same price, —and get it; the rich man stands in line with the poor; and usually tipping is forbidden. In this suave atmosphere, the differences of cunning, charm, and wealth, that determine our lives outside, are forgotten. All men enter these portals equal, and thus the movies are perhaps a symbol of democracy. Let us take heart from this, and not be downcast because our democratic nation prudently reserves its democracy for the temple of day-dreams.

LLOYD LEWIS.

CORRESPONDENCE

French Conscientious Objectors

SIR: We desire to call the attention of your readers to the tragedy of certain French conscientious objectors to war, convicted during the World War, who are still today in exile in the penal colony of French Guiana on the South American coast.

To the atrocities of Devil's Island, made famous by the Dreyfus case, and revealed again in its present-day horrors by Blair Niles in "Condemned" and by a French journalist in "Dante Saw Nothing," are now added the revelations of the penal colony on the mainland to which certain convicts are shipped from France after completing their prison sentences there.

Some must stay for a period of years equal to their imprisonment in France; those sentenced to more than eight years must stay for life. Even after the period is up, convicts must themselves find the means to get back home. The French government pays nothing.

Our attention was called to the tragic plight of some twenty conscientious objectors now there, whose terms are up but who are too poor to get home, by a letter from one of them to the War Resisters' International at London. This man, Pierre de Thèze, a French journalist and Socialist, was condemned in 1915 for his refusal to take part in the War. After serving seven years in France, he was shipped to Guiana. The facts he reports have been verified. He says:

I venture to draw your attention to the position of those who, like myself, objectors to war, refused to take part in 1914 in the world-butchery. Many others besides myself were condemned for our ideas and propaganda by merciless military judges, who treated us as though we were assassins and bandits. In 1922 we were sent to Guiana for some years. Our life during those years was indescribable. Obliged to live without resources, in a colony without industry, without agriculture, without trade, many died from misery after indescribable suffering. Always hungry, often without shelter, exhausted by the tropical climate, they became an easy prey to the ravages of general debility and malaria.

About a score are still living; we have served our sentences, we are nominally free to return to France, to our country, to our relatives and friends, to our homes. But if we can hardly keep body and soul together, how find the means for crossing the ocean? Are we destined, after paying the penalty exacted by military justice, to a slow agony, under a burning sky, without hope of ever quitting this hell on earth?

I have nursed the idea of filming here, on the spot, the scenes of suffering and misery of the *"libérés"* (common criminals exiled for life after completing their sentences in France) who, to the number of 2,000 die literally of starvation, reduced like lost dogs to nosing and scratching through the streets of St. Laurent de Maroni in search of food. The screen would have revealed these scenes of misery, and from all parts human feelings would have sent some help

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to ameliorate the conditions of these poor victims. . . . .

I count on my return to Europe on holding conferences on the heart-rending situation of the military prisoners in Guiana and to publish my book in several languages so that the whole world shall know in what manner in the twentieth century those are martyred whom the French War Councils sent to die in the Guianese bush. . . .

I have already received the names of several war-resisting comrades and I hope soon to send you a complete list. As for their addresses, very few, alas, possess in this sad country a fixed abode. Some are in hospitals and some are in the bush. Others are in the out-of-the-way villages or the places where they are employed at very hard work at a starvation wage.

Mrs. Blair Niles, author of "Condemned," says:

I do most emphatically corroborate what he says of the tragic conditions of the *"libérés"* in the French Guiana Penal Colony. It is impossible to overstate the wretched existence of these men.

The cost of returning them to France in the convict ship would amount to nothing more than the food they would consume on the voyage. The ship—"La Martinière"—comes out to Guiana at least once a year, bringing new victims to Guiana. She returns with a cargo of the native timber. The quarters occupied by the convicts shipped from France could be used for returning to France all those whose sentences have expired. Thus to return men to their homeland would seem the most fundamental act of justice.

If this could be done and if the exile terms which follow the completion of the prison sentences could be abolished, two great acts of mercy and of justice would have been achieved.

The American Fellowship of Reconciliation has advanced the $125 necessary to get de Thèze back to France, but we must make up that sum and collect more to help the others to return.

Will any friends who are moved by this account of one of the outstanding barbarities of the world's penal colonies aid by sending contributions so marked to the Fellowship of Reconciliation, 383 Bible House, New York City?

ROGER BALDWIN,
PAUL JONES,
JOHN NEVIN SAYRE.

New York City.

Today's Church or Yesterday's?

SIR: Your tail-end paragraph of the last short editorial in the March 6 issue reads: "Lock the young people up in church several hours each Sunday, and then see to it that they have no opportunity for organized recreation." And this is put out as an answer to a supposed program of the Lord's Day Alliance, which, it seems, is planning on a better relationship for the Lord's Day. You berate the Alliance, and presumably all people who might think there is something worth-while in using the day for purposes different than yours, as being responsible for "Blue Sunday." And you spring on us another Scotch joke. You surely must have access to psychological mysteries which only the gods know of, when you lambaste the Scottish people for their juvenile delinquency, which you glibly attribute to the strict Sabbath observance of that little porridge land.

I turned to another magazine (The Christian Century, of Chicago), which I hold in high esteem, as I do yours, and I read in their issue of February 28, in a short editorial, as their closing words: "Back of the lawlessness stands the corrupted public officer; back of the corrupt officer stands the illicit liquor syndicate; back of the illicit liquor syndicate stands the booze runner; back of the booze runner stands the bootlegger; back of the bootlegger stands the citizen who buys the stuff."

And as I read these two observations I could not help feeling that the Chicago writer was talking about the present affairs in the language of today with his mind aflame with ideas of today; while your editorial writer was doing the same thing, but with this distinction, having his mind glutted with ideas of the Church current, if ever, of a long-ago yesterday.

When you spring on us, and many of your readers who perhaps pay little attention to the Church's side of an issue, some interpretation, give us the credit of being up-to-date. Why always tie up any social reform which you do not like to some old outgrown idea, good in its day, but irrelevant to this?

When such a move is on as that in Scotland or your state, would it not be well to consult an authority on the understanding of the Lord's Day, like Dr. Cadman, Frank Kingdom, or Dr. Bowie? They represent religious belief of this day. Give the Church a break.

In your sheet, as in some other circles, there is a vain attempt at humanism as the cure-all and complete answer to the spiritual longing of the human heart. Always one sees the threat to a Personal Deity. Slam away at Him; your forbears have been at it for centuries and their wrecked ordnance scatters the pages of history.

Rutland Heights, Mass. WALLACE HAYES.

Papal Infallibility and the Monroe Doctrine

SIR: While I agree with you on the Monroe Doctrine—its origin, development and present meaning (The New Republic, January 30, "The Monroe Doctrine's New Phase"), I must take exception to your comparison of this Doctrine with that of papal *infallibility*. The one may have taken on an entirely new complexion in the century it has existed, but the other has remained unchanged throughout the centuries. The Protestant doctrine of "individual interpretation" has not and cannot supplant it. Pure reason stands in the way of such a substitution.

VICTOR S. BARIL.

Flint, Mich.

Against Military Service

SIR: Your readers may be interested in a letter I have recently sent to the President of the United States, of which I enclose a copy.

WM. W. HARRIS, JR.,
Major U. S. Army (Retired).

Clemson College, S. C.

[ENCLOSURE]

HONORABLE HERBERT HOOVER,
Washington, D. C.

SIR: I request that you have arrangements made—through legislation if necessary—for stopping the retired pay, which is now being paid to me, or rather into the account being held for me, as a pension for former service rendered by me as an officer of the United States Army.

I have accepted Christ, and I love him with my whole heart. I cannot imagine Jesus stabbing men to death with a bayonet, or destroying their lungs with poison gas. Would I not be a fool if I claimed to be a follower of Christ, and at the same time engaged in doing those things which I know He hates?

That this retired pay is one of the many schemes by which the Beast buys men's souls, and engages them to do his murdering for him, has become very apparent to me. I therefore, in the name of Almighty God, before whom I stand, have the honor to inform you, sir, that I shall in the future refuse to kill my fellow men at anybody's command, and I shall refuse to accept any money, which may be offered to me in the future, as compensation for having engaged in that business which I now hate with all my heart and soul.

There are millions of Christians who, strengthened by Christ, will stand like a great rock, when anti-Christ, in his lust for gold and for glory, tries to force them into his great murder machine, to kill their fellow men. Who are the great beasts of the earth that we should bow down to them? Not by the power of Satan's might, but by the Spirit of God we shall stand.

WM. W. HARRIS, JR.

Clemson College, S. C.

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Mr. Churchill on the Peace

The Aftermath, by Winston S. Churchill. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 502 pages. $5.

MR. CHURCHILL has finished his task—by far and away the greatest contribution to the history of the War, the only one which combines the gifts of the historian and born writer with the profound experiences and direct knowledge of one of the prime movers of events. This last volume is not so good, I think, as the two which preceded it—a falling away which is probably one more of the disappointing consequences of the author's latest bout of office. For authorship is a whole-time job; and so is the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. But it is much better than those who have read the rather flat, rhetorical extracts published by The London Times will have surmised. For these lose, as extracts do, the sweep and impression of the whole.

Mr. Churchill records in his preface what a number of important events in which he was personally concerned had utterly passed from his mind. This, he adds, is probably an experience common to most of the principal actors, "one impression effaced another." So with anyone who lived in the administrative flux. For me the quality of the Midland Railway breakfast marmalade served up in the Hotel Majestic has stuck faster than anything else; I know *exactly* what that experience was like. It was only for those who lived for months in the trenches or suffered some repetitive military routine, where one impression reinforced another, that the War can in memory be lived over again. Yet Mr. Churchill has contrived to convey a contemporary impression of motives and atmosphere—though, curiously, least of all by the contemporary documents he quotes, which the reader will instinctively skip—such as posterity would never be able to reconstruct for itself. The book contains, too, some singularly moving passages, where the emotions of the moment had left behind them a permanent furrow; of which I would particularly instance the accounts of the British demobilization and of the Irish Treaty. Moreover, it serves to bring back to us with overwhelming effect, what of everything we are most disposed to forget—the violence, bloodshed, and tumult of the *post*-war years, the "Aftermath" of Mr. Churchill's title.

The book is mainly made up of four distinct topics, of which the successive chapters are, rather distractingly, intermixed—the Peace Conference, the Russian Revolution, the Irish Rebellion, and the Greco-Turkish imbroglio. Of these the account of the Russian business is—as one might expect—the least satisfactory. Mr. Churchill does not seek to defend unduly his own part in the fiascos of the Russian civil wars. But he fails to see—or at least to set—in perspective the bigness of the events in their due relations, or to disentangle the essential from casual episodes. He half admits the inevitable futility of the proceedings which he supported; he lets one see the wretched character and effete incompetence of the Russian Whites whom he would have so much liked to idealize ("It was not the want of material means, but of comradeship, will-power, and rugged steadfastness that lost the struggle"); and he quotes Foch, who firmly refused to have anything to do with the affair, as remarking "with much discernment" that "these armies of Kolchak and Denikin cannot last long because they have no civil governments behind them." But the Bolsheviks remain for him, in spite of his tribute to the greatness of Lenin, nothing more than an imbecile atrocity. His imagination cannot see them as the Great Scavengers, and the officers of the Whites as better employed in the films. Yet can he believe that his fine peroration—"Russia, self-outcast, sharpens her bayonets in her Arctic night, and mechanically proclaims through self-starved lips her philosophy of hatred and death"—is really the whole of the truth?

Apart from Russia, Mr. Churchill appears, in a degree to which public opinion has done much less than justice, as an ardent and persistent advocate of the policy of appeasement—appeasement in Germany, in Ireland, in Turkey. As he wrote to Mr. Lloyd George in March, 1920—"Since the Armistice my policy would have been, 'Peace with the German people, war on the Bolshevik tyranny.'" Throughout the Peace Conference such influence as he had was cast on the side of moderation.

His account of the Peace Conference itself is less personal in character than any other part of the book; for he was, indeed, but little directly concerned with it. He visited Paris once or twice, but was mainly in London, preoccupied with other matters. It is, therefore, a general view which he presents, as it appeared to a member of the British Cabinet who was outside the main stream of the negotiations. His attitude is to deplore—but to shrug his shoulders. There has been too much shrugging of the shoulders both at the time and since. He justifies his shrug on two grounds: first, because politicians are not only pusillanimous, but rightly so, their pusillanimity being merely a realization of their actual impotence; and, secondly, because financial and economic mistakes work themselves out in due course, whereas frontiers, which were not so badly handled by the Conference, are the only long-period realities. One could say the same thing about the miseries of the War itself—they are all over now—and indeed about most things, for the consequences, even if they persist, are generally lost in the river of time; and the doctrine that statesmen must always act contrary to their convictions, when to do otherwise would lose them office, implies that they are less easily replaceable than is really the case. I believed then, and I believe now, that it was a situation where an investment in political courage would have been marvellously repaid in the end.

Mr. Churchill's account of the Conference lacks the intensity of feeling which would be natural to one who had been tormented on the spot. But it is, all the same, the best short handbook yet written to the general character of what really happened. There are one or two points in it worth picking out. Mr. Churchill does well to emphasize the prolongation of the blockade of Germany through the first half of 1919 as a question of first-rate importance. The remarkable history of the successive negotiations for the renewal of the Armistice and the provisioning of Germany has never yet been written. He recognizes their importance, but his account of them is by no means accurate, and indicates that he was not conversant with, or has forgotten, the details. It was not the "officials" who were to blame. If any individual is to be picked out as chiefly responsible for prolonging the dreadful privations of Central Europe, it must certainly be the celebrated Monsieur Klotz. I think he is right in saying that Mr. Lloyd George was quite genuine about hanging the Kaiser and continued to harbor such sentiments long after others had cooled off; but that he never, at any time, entertained an illusion about reparations or made any statement which did not, if read carefully, include a saving clause.

It is well, too, that he gives the world a fuller account than has been published before of the meeting of the British Empire Delegation convened by Mr. Lloyd George in Paris on June 1, 1919, to consider the German reply to

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the draft Treaty of Peace. The Prime Minister had called this meeting "to strengthen himself in his efforts to obtain a mitigation of the peace terms." Mr. Churchill himself circulated a memorandum, endorsed by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, urging that we should, at least, meet the Germans half-way. These views were accepted by practically the whole of the Delegation and of the Cabinet, including Mr. Austen Chamberlain, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Birkenhead, Lord Milner, and Mr. Balfour. The meeting resolved that many important concessions should be made, and added a rider authorizing the Prime Minister "to use the full weight of the entire British Empire even to the point of refusing the services of the British Army to advance into Germany, or the services of the British Navy to enforce the blockade of Germany." This was the second time that Mr. Lloyd George had made a genuine, but abortive, effort for a "good" peace. But it was not to be. The plebiscite for Upper Silesia was obtained as an almost solitary concession. For the rest, it was President Wilson —as I have described in "The Economic Consequences of the Peace"—who at this stage was "not taking any."

Mr. Churchill has a good deal to say about President Wilson. He has had the advantage not only of his own memories, but of Colonel House's latest volumes, which have cast on the scene so bright a side-light. As the evidence accumulates, the impression is confirmed of a blind man, unbelievably out of touch with the realities of things, filled with all the wrong suspicions. But peace to his spirit. Mr. Churchill's summing up is just:

> The influence of mighty, detached, and well meaning America upon the European settlement was a precious agency of hope. It was largely squandered in sterile conflicts and half-instructed and half-pursued interferences. If President Wilson had set himself from the beginning to make common cause with Lloyd George and Clemenceau, the whole force of these three great men, the heads of the dominant nations, might have played with plenary and beneficent power over the wide scene of European tragedy. He consumed his own strength and theirs in conflicts in which he was always worsted. He gained as an antagonist and corrector results which were pitifully poor compared to those which would have rewarded comradeship. He might have made everything swift and easy. He made everything slower and more difficult. He might have carried a settlement at the time when leadership was strong. He acquiesced in second-rate solutions when the phase of exhaustion and dispersion had supervened.
>
> However, as Captain he went down with his ship.

The chronicle is finished. With what feelings does one lay down Mr. Churchill's two-thousandth page? Gratitude to one who can write with so much eloquence and feeling of things which are part of the lives of all of us of the war generation, but which he saw and knew much closer and clearer. Admiration for his energies of mind and his intense absorption of intellectual interest and elemental emotion in what is for the moment the matter in hand—which is his best quality. A little envy, perhaps, for his undoubting conviction that frontiers, races, patriotisms, even wars if need be, are ultimate verities for mankind, which lends for him a kind of dignity and even nobility to events, which for others are only a nightmare interlude, something to be permanently avoided.

J. M. Keynes.

The Central Americans

The Central Americans: Adventures and Impressions between Mexico and Panama, by Arthur Ruhl. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 275 pages. $3.

THE Central America of O. Henry and Richard Harding Davis—the tropical beach, cocoanut palms, picturesque natives and equally picturesque tropical tramps —may still be found along the coast between Mexico and Panama, and is meat for the writers of travel books and the editors of Sunday supplements. But this, as Mr. Ruhl says, is "far from the whole picture, or even the more significant facts." He has done something more important than write a travel story. He has written a book which should be read by all Americans who are interested in the little republics to the south of us and in the problems involved in our relations with them. This is not an academic discussion of political conditions in Latin Americ nor of our foreign policy. Nor does it attempt to offer programs for the guidance of our officials in Washington, but it does convey most convincingly much valuable information regarding the character and psychology of these little-known and greatly misunderstood people. Mr. Ruhl has the advantage of having first-hand knowledge of our interventions in the affairs of other Caribbean countries. His view is that our intentions have been honest, though we have occasionally made more or less of a mess of things. The faults in our official treatment of these countries have been, he remarks: "Not so much those of policy, as a lack of policy; not those of malice or unfriendliness, but of ignorance and ineptitude."

Considering the rapidly increasing economic importance of these countries to the United States, Mr. Ruhl holds that the influence of American capitalists on the policy of our Department of State has been astonishingly slight. In his opinion, our responsible officials in Washington have been so influenced by the fear of being accused of "Dollar Diplomacy" as to have been neglectful of legitimate American interests. These economically backward countries are being drawn into "the general stream of the modern world." Profound changes are inevitably taking place and, regardless of whether or not express trains and automobiles are better than ox-carts and burros, the industrial revolution which came to the western world a century ago, "the real and tragic revolution," as Mr. Ruhl says, "for which nobody is to blame and which no amount of good will on either side can stop," is profoundly affecting the lives of the people of Central America.

In theory, he points out, the policy of the United States in Latin America is not intended to infringe on the independence of the other American states. Our national sentiments and actual purposes are opposed to establishing protectorates over the Latin-American countries or depriving them of their sovereignty. Much of the misunderstanding and misinterpretation of our purposes has been directly due to ineptitude. Although we have acquired colonies and dependencies and assumed spheres of influence which amount, in some cases at least, to protectorates, and have intervened in the affairs of the weaker nations of the Caribbean and thereby assumed definite obligations toward them, we have created no suitable organization in Washington to handle the intricate and delicate problems involved, and, owing largely to our political system, we have had no continuity of policy. That our State Department is undermanned and is not properly organized to handle the responsibilities resulting from the increasing importance

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of our foreign relations is realized by every student of conditions in Latin America. Mr. Ruhl has a clear understanding of this, and possesses the happy faculty of giving an able expression to his conclusions. "What is needed," Mr. Ruhl says, "is not so much a change of policy towards the Caribbean countries as a clearer definition of it, a better understanding of their conditions and peculiar prejudices, and some suitable organization for carrying on our relations with continuity and intelligence. The policy itself may be well enough, the man at the top well meaning and able, and yet the whole machine put out of order because some individual rough-neck out at the end of the line in the jungle takes a few drinks too many or happens to suffer from dementia præcox."

Mr. Ruhl's earlier book, "The Other Americans," was, as its title suggested, written with the purpose of showing that there *are* "other Americans on this continent, and that these other Americans have their life, literature, and point of view, infinitely important to them, however it may be ignored by the people of these United States." The World War interposed between the earlier book and this, in which the author, after most interesting experiences in Europe, returns to his old stamping ground. "The Central Americans" does for the little republics of the Isthmus very much what "The Other Americans" did for the larger republics of South America, and does it well.

H. P. Davis.

Halcyon Days on Broadway

Annals of the New York Stage: Vols. III and IV, by George C. D. Odell. New York: Columbia University Press. 1,504 pages. $17.50 each.

IN two previous volumes of this work, Professor Odell was able to carry the New York theater from its beginnings to 1821; these 1,500 new pages take it only to the summer of 1843. Even this they do only by means of a fairly strict confinement to the subject in hand, which is neither the history of the drama nor dramatic biography, but what was played, by whom, and where. This alone is an enormous subject, and requires, not the exclusion, but the subordination, of criticism and personalities; and it is right that the heroes of the saga should be, not actors, but managers.

As the 1821 curtain rises, it discloses little American drama, few native actors; other than politically, we were still semi-colonials, and were to remain so for a time. When Americans wrote (except about their wars) they usually wrote romances of feudal castles. In 1829 there actually appeared a play, "The Times," of life in New York, "but it was many years before an American play could be produced on equal terms with one of foreign birth." Yet things moved before 1843. T. D. Rice's Negro impersonations, G. H. Hill's Yankee monologues and skits, were beginning to assert our separate individuality; Mitchell's Olympic, toward the end, was as American as Artemus Ward, from its burlesque of Ellsler down to its sly play-bills; Barnum was in the closing scene, having crashed the newspapers, even before acquiring his first museum, by presenting (at Niblo's Garden) George Washington's nurse: 161 years old, toothless, blind, incapable of motion save in her right arm, and 100 percent fraudulent. Finally, we note the increasingly frequent black-face song hits, beginning, in 1824, with "Massa George Washington and General La Fayette," and including "Coal Black Rose," the immortal "Zip Coon," "Jump Jim Crow," "My Long-Tailed Blue," "Sukey Cinder," "Such a Gittin' Up Stairs," and "Jim along Josey."

Names that still are names appear for the first time in the New York of these years, a shining procession. At random: Junius Brutus Booth (a greater name, apparently, in the mouths of those who never saw him), Forrest, Macready, C. E. Horn, Fanny Kemble, Tyrone Power, Mme. Vestris (a greater name in London, since here she was victim of one of our recurrent patriotico-moralistic fevers), Ellen Tree, the great singer Mme. Malibran; the dancers whose startled figures embellish old sheet music—Celeste, Augusta, the lesser Taglioni and the incomparable Fanny Ellsler.

But the subject is not limited to the theater proper; there are also the "entertainments," ranging from mere art exhibitions in the earlier, thinner days, to the original twins who were really Siamese, the earliest flea circus, the circus itself, the balloon ascensions—with luck—at Castle Garden, the kangaroo, the musical glasses, and that strangest of forgotten modes of entertainment, that of administering "the exhilarating laughing gas" to hapless subjects on the stage. This is a great work as well as a massive; despite all the vivacity of the writer's style and the constant freshness of his enthusiasm, it is valuable chiefly for reference or for skimming, but for the purpose to which it is devoted it will be indispensable. May its writer be spared to proceed through the "splendors of the mid-century" which he promises; to penetrate, if he will, down to the last of all the Follies.

Abbe Niles.

M. Faÿ on America

The American Experiment, by Bernard Faÿ. In collaboration with Avery Claflin. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 264 pages. $2.75.

FRANKLY, this book is a great disappointment to me. Previous to reading it I entertained the highest opinion of M. Faÿ. "The American Experiment" is weak on the interpretive and the factual sides, and betrays certain qualities of mind that are distinctly displeasing. Although it does embody some discerning observations, like that to the effect that we have failed to capture the respect of the South Americans, it cannot for one moment aspire to a place beside its great predecessor, Siegfried's "America Comes of Age." Nor is it provocative like Romier's "Who Will Be the Master?" which, with all its faults, is still a book with a fruitful point of view.

The first three chapters are historical and will undoubtedly be of considerable use to uninformed French readers. But to Americans they are not new either in facts or interpretations. Indeed they do not appeal to me as being very illuminating, for they are a somewhat theoretical discussion of our governmental machinery as affected by the winds of political passions. M. Faÿ would have been better advised if he had brought to the attention of French readers the fact that economic trends have always meant more in the history of this country than political trends. The chapter on the American "race" (once more this word is misused) is competent, but the facts are not closely knit together. Our deep-seated imperialism is sketchily indicated.

When it comes to interpreting contemporary American life, M. Faÿ is exceedingly unreliable. It is impossible to list here all of the astonishing errors of perception and proportion, so some of the more significant may be presented as

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typical. He betrays, for one thing, his bourgeois hostility to economic radicalism when he writes: ". . . Americans have for some time been aiming to establish equality of wealth instead of equality of poverty which seems to be the objective of most left-wing parties in Europe." Reference to statistics showing the distribution of the national income will dissipate this illusion, which, by the way, is an error into which Romier also fell. M. Faÿ gives a discussion of the high standard of living that obtains among the skilled workers, which is purely fictitious and not in harmony with the facts. The most recent demonstration of the fallaciousness of this view is contained in "Middletown." "Harvard," he writes, "is the citadel of liberalism." How about President Lowell's judgment of Sacco and Vanzetti? Later he says: ". . . Organized advertising enables the papers to live in independence and self-respect." This needs no bush. Perhaps compared to the venal French press our papers are free, but it is an exceedingly dubious dogma. M. Faÿ reveals a distressing prejudice against the Germans: "The German masses are largely stupid and unpolished, and frequently despised." Why pick on the German masses? He then attributes the enlistment of American youths in French ambulance corps during the War to a reaction against the despised German influence! On the other hand, he asserts that the French Canadians, while not productive of superior types, are respected. This is quite at variance with my own extensive observations in Salem, Fall River and New Bedford, Massachusetts. He concludes his brief and extremely prejudiced discussion of the Negroes thus: "On the whole the Negroes are well liked and tolerated as naughty children, amusing and good for nothing. They are not despised, since no one takes them seriously [sic]. In the great conflict of races, they may be a distraction or a hindrance, but little else." He puts in as gossip the allegation that the Ku Klux Klan has burned Catholic churches. Why? Indeed, he implies that violence against Catholic Europeans is common, but says nothing about the lynching of Negroes. And finally, his references to American literature are exceedingly disappointing when one considers that M. Faÿ has shown his interest in letters by writing an excellent survey of modern French literature, "Panorama de la Littérature Contemporaine."

C. Hartley Grattan.

Isolation

The Ghetto, by Louis Wirth. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 291 pages. $3.

MR. WIRTH'S book is an unpretentious sociological study of the ghetto as a natural phenomenon, with, as he says, "no solution to the so-called Jewish problem . . . [submitted] without offering an apology and without presenting a program."

Within these self-confessed limitations, and considering that it is purely a sociological documentation of facts, it is a valuable and sincere piece of work, founded on a study of the Chicago ghetto. It is grounded in the sound notion that, so far from activity being a result of mind, mind is a result of activity. The Jewish character has been molded by the isolation of the ghetto, an isolation at first self-imposed even in Europe, and entirely so in America. Mr. Wirth emphasizes the fact that the ghetto is less a locality than a state of mind, and that its cultural isolation encourages its Jewish inhabitants in deepening their racial peculiarities.

It is interesting to compare the author's view of the cultural dominance of the synagogue with the view of Jean and Jerome Tharaud, whose swift, splendid "The Chosen People" has just been published in translation. The latter see the history of the European ghetto as an attempt to escape from the dominance of the synagogue, either through rationalism or mysticism. It is obvious that this difference in approach is not merely one of personal opinion but one determined by focal center. In short, an exact, scientific and detailed study of one locality does not take the place of a sweeping perspective.

Perhaps no paragraph in the book is more significant than the following:

> While the [reformed] Jews see the modern ghetto as a menace to their status as persons and as citizens, the inhabitants of the ghetto itself are immune to the conflicts that disturb the peace of mind of the rest of Jewry. The "Jewish problem" is a problem of a divided consciousness that is experienced by the partly assimilated Jews on the frontier of the gentile world, not by the inhabitants of the ghetto itself, who cling to the warmth of the familial and tribal hearth.

Jean B. Temple.

A Defense of Poetry

The Garment of Praise, by Eleanor Carroll Chilton and Herbert Agar. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 393 pages. $5.

POETRY, then, is the language of the spirit, and actual poetry is the attempted interpretation of that unspoken tongue in words."

The above quotation is the central theme of this book, a defense of poetry and an oblique attack upon contemporary poets. This is no voice shrieking in the wilderness; it is a solid, orderly thesis fathered by the dogma of Matthew Arnold, with George Santayana performing the services of the Angel Gabriel.

Because of their central argument the authors have written their most effective chapters around the personalities of Milton and Shelley. It is here that they build their figures greater than life size, making them giants of the Platonic Dialogues, masters of phantoms and realities. Here they speak of "the modern spirit of individualism," urging it on to fight against the rational attitudes of the eighteenth century and the scientific obsessions of the twentieth. In this concept economic struggles are lost; humanity itself is almost forgotten. You almost forget that Milton stood in danger of imprisonment, that his estates were confiscated, that Shelley was an exile. The poet becomes an Olympian Mussolini, dictator extraordinary of Heaven, Earth and Hell.

Miss Chilton and Mr. Agar have used their historical perspective in such fashion that even Shakespeare becomes sharply divorced from his fellows. They have created a world of giants to slay the minor British poets of our time. The authors direct their attack against literary artists who, with the exception of Thomas Hardy and T. S. Eliot, are scarcely worth considering at all. Yeats's name is never mentioned. Yet fire and lightning are called down upon the heads of Edith Sitwell and Robert Graves.

American poetry they practically ignore. Whitman is named, but not defined. E. A. Robinson, Robert Frost and Sandburg are dismissed with one line. Since the authors are eager to make the point that contemporary poets have little spiritual value and no sense of the cosmos,

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it seems that Robinson Jeffers and Hart Crane have been deliberately mislaid and forgotten. By expurgating the vitality in American poetry, the authors win their case easily.

In stating the need for positive and assertive points of view projected through the medium of poetry, Miss Chilton and Mr. Agar deserve sympathy and admiration. No one will deny that a sense of sterility and impotence has made a waste land of British poetry today. But by stressing individualism as an integral part of their main thesis, their critical position approaches literary Fascism.

HORACE GREGORY.

John Wilkes Booth; Fact and Fiction of Lincoln's Assassination, by Francis Wilson. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 311 pages. $4.50.

THIS book contains a deal of interesting new material about a gruesome and well known subject. After the failure of his plot to kidnap Lincoln, Booth felt himself God-ordained to murder him, Mr. Wilson believes. The subject of the fictitious Booths is handled in overwhelming detail. Unfortunately, the author is an actor and not a competent writer. By his redundancy and misarrangement much that should be plain has been made confusing and obscure. But his main purpose can never be mistaken. He is a gentleman in the best sense of the word. He wants to tell the truth. Moreover, he views an appallingly bitter epoch without bitterness. When a final, working biography is to be written, the usefulness of Mr. Wilson's work will appear.

C. A. C.

A Correction

The price of "The Child in America," by William I. and Dorothy Swaine Thomas, and published by Alfred A. Knopf, is $5, not $7.50, as announced in our issue of March 13.

Contributors

ERNEST GRUENING was formerly managing editor of The Nation, and is now editor of the Portland Evening News. He is the author of "Mexico and Its Heritage," published last fall.

ARTHUR DAVISON FICKE has written many books of verse; the most recent is "Mountain against Mountain."

R. L. DUFFUS, a well known journalist, was formerly a member of the staff of The San Francisco Bulletin, The New York Globe, and The New York Herald.

STUART CHASE is a member of the Labor Bureau, Inc., and the author of "The Tragedy of Waste," and, with F. J. Schlink, of "Your Money's Worth." The series of which this is the fourth article will appear, in expanded form, as part of the material in his forthcoming book, to be published by the Macmillan Company.

LLOYD LEWIS has been on the staffs of several Chicago newspapers, and is now in the advertising business. He is an occasional contributor to magazines.

J. M. KEYNES, editor of The Economic Journal, is the author of "The Economic Consequences of the Peace," "The End of Laissez Faire," and other books.

H. P. DAVIS is the author of "Black Democracy," published last year by The Dial Press.

ABBE NILES, a former Rhodes Scholar, collaborated with W. C. Hardy on "Blues," an anthology of Negro songs.

C. HARTLEY GRATTAN is the author of "Bitter Bierce: A Mystery of American Letters."

JEAN B. TEMPLE was formerly a teacher at the Walden School, New York City, and the Farrar School.

HORACE GREGORY is a poet whose work has appeared in Transition and other magazines.

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By the time of the Revolution, Captain Clarke was no more; but "Chelsea" sheltered his widow, Mistress Molly Clarke, her two pretty daughters, and a squad of soldiers from the Continental fortified camp not far away. The legend goes that Mistress Clarke, fearing for the welfare of the pretty daughters, protested so vigorously against the presence of the Continentals that the commander of the camp, one George Washington, came in person to allay her fears.

"Chelsea" was immortalized, however, not by captain or general, but by a poet. After the death of Mistress Clarke the estate passed into the hands of one of the pretty daughters and her husband, Bishop Moore, and by them was conveyed to the son, Clement C. Moore. Here, in 1822, this sweet singer of Chelsea gave to the world his masterpiece, "A Visit from St. Nicholas."

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(Guide to Chelsea, No. 3)

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